

A  
LEARNED AND  
EXCELLENT  
TREATISE.

CONTAINING ALL  
THE PRINCIPALL GROUNDS  
OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

SET DOWNE BY WAY OF  
conference, in a most plaine and  
familiar manner.

WRITTEN FIRST IN FRENCH, BY  
M. Mat. Virel: after translated into Latine, and  
then into English, for the vse of our Country-men.

*The eleventh Impression.*

Now newly reuised, and very much amended;  
according to the best and perfectest copy:  
with a Table thereunto annexed.

---

1. TIM. 4. 15.

*These things meditate, and labour in them, that thy profiting may  
be manifest to all.*

---

LONDON,

Printed by THOMAS DAVVSON, for Elizabeth  
Bishop; and are to be sold in Pauls Church-yard, at the  
signe of the Brazen Serpent. 1650.



## THE ARGVMENT AND ORDER of the three Bookes of Christian *Religion.*

### THE FIRST BOOKE

**D**ecleareth the fundamentall points of our saluation. And it consisteth of foure Chap.

The first whereof intreateth of the knowledge of God; who, being perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull, doth not onely shew mercy, but also declare his iustice.

The second, of the knowledge of man: who, being a most miserable sinner, is guiltie of eternall death before the iudgement seat of God.

The third, of the knowledge of Christ: who, hauing satisfied the most perfect iustice of God for vs, openeth a way to his most perfect mercy: wherebv wee may obtaine forgiveness of our sins.

The fourth, of faith: whereby we are made one with Christ; and so, partakers of all his benefits, and euen of euerlasting life.

### THE SECOND BOOKE

**C**ontaineth the testimonies of our saluation: and it consisteth of two Chapters.

The first whereof intreateth of good works: by the which, faith (lying hid in our hearts) is manifested.

The second, of prayer, which for the testifying and confirming of our faith, hath the first and chiefe place among good workes.

### THE THIRD BOOKE

**S**eteth before vs the outward meanes, whereby God bringeth vs to saluation. And it consisteth of foure Chapters.

The first whereof intreateth of the ministry of the Word: by the which the holy Ghost begetteth faith in our hearts, keepeth it there, and increaseth it.

The second, of the Sacraments, ordained of God to be as seales of the word; to the end we might with greater assurance embrace the promises revealed vnto vs, in the word of Christ.

The third, of Baptisme: whereby God testifieth, that we are receiued of him into covenant, forasmuch as hee communicateth Christ vnto vs, together with his benefits.

The fourth, of the Lords Supper: by the which God witnesseth, that his covenant is confirmed in vs, in that he maketh vs more & more partakers of Christ and his gifts.

**T**he summe of all, laid downe in a triple or threefold methode: that we may the better know the order and coherence of euery point of Christian Religion; as also the truth, excellency, and profit of the same.

T O





TO THE CHRISTIAN  
READER, AN ADMONI-  
TION TOVCHING  
READING.



**I**T falleth out in matter of learning, as it doth in matter of meates: for, as in meates, one and the selfe same is diuersly set forth; according to the inclination of the dresser, and appetise of the eater; so, in learning; one and the selfe same point is diuersly handled; according to the discretion of the Writer, and capacitie of the

Reader. Hence it commeth, that in humane learning euery Writer (almost) hath his Grammer, Rhetoricke, his Logicke, his Philosophy; and in diuine knowledge, his Catechisme, his Common places, his Commentaries. Many complaine of this, as a thing which distraeth the minde, confoundeth the memorie, and hindreth the iudgement. And not without cause: For, as varietie of meate doe corrupt in the stomacke, and breed sickness, rather then preserue health; so varietie of Treatises, vpon one & the selfe same thing, doth hinder the growth and profiting of diuers in soundnesse of iudgement, and Godly life. But, the reformation hereof is a worke worthie of al the Churches, Princes and Seates in Christendome: for the beginning and perfecting whereof, private men can but pray and wish well, and euery man carefully looke to the warrant of his owne worke. In the meane time, let no man blame the varietie & choice of Gods manifold gifts which, both in bodily and spiritual things, set forth the riches of his wisdom and goodnesse: but let vs blame the corruption and varietie of men; who doe either not all vse, or else greatly abuse the gifts and blessings of God bestowed vpon them. This vanitie ap-

## THE PREFACE.

p. Sam. 17, 23.
 peareth partly in the foode of the body; but more specially in the  
 foode of the soule. For no man will refuse his meate, except it bee  
 in some extreame passion. Besides, how carefull are the most part  
 in making their provision? how curious in asking what is whol-  
 some or hurtfull for them? how precise and constant in keeping  
 their houres for dinner and supper? how willing to keepe them-  
 selues to some few kinds of meate? though they haue oftentasted  
 and fed on them before. But, touching the food of the soule (which  
 consisteth chiefly in an holy attendance on the publike worship of  
 God, and partly in priuate reading, meditation, and prayer) how  
 many doe refuse it, as a fruitlesse and vsauory thing! And  
 though the most part be counted for some carnall respect, to shew  
 themselves in the publike assemblies: yet, who shall finde a faith-  
 full Christian, that is carefull to redeeme the time, and to make  
 himselfe, by priuate reading & meditation, more fit to reap fruit  
 by the publike ministry of the Word and Sacraments? But, know  
 thou (beloued) that as they, who through error, preiudice, or self-  
 loue, are so addicted to their priuate studies, that they despise, or  
 neglect the publike ministry, shall (without spedymency of God)  
 fall into diuers fond opinions, & dangerous error, and pine away  
 in their ignorance and sinnes: so, to little purpose is our bearing  
 of Sermons abroad, if there be not a settled, & constant course of  
 priuate prayer, reading, meditation and conference at home. But  
 because my purpose is now to speake onely of reading, and that  
 very briefly (for the argument is infinite, and I haue somewhat  
 touched it elsewheere) I would intreat thee, Christian Reader, &  
 in the Lord Iesus beseech thee (if my request may seeme reasona-  
 ble) that thou wouldest be as wise for thy soule, as thou art for  
 thy bodie; as mindfull of the life to come, as thou art of this pre-  
 sent life; and that, to this end, thou wouldest obserue these  
 foure things, as well for the one as for the other. First, therefore,  
 make thy provision of good bookes; especially of the booke of all  
 bookes, I meane the holy canonicall Scriptures, in that respect  
 called the Bible: & then of some others, such as are most fit for  
 thy calling and cappacity. And, because thou shalt want either  
 money to buy, leasure to read, iudgement to vnderstand, or me-  
 mory to beare away the substance of all good bookes, provide the  
 best. Many will say, they finde by experience, that in meate and  
 apparrell, the best is best cheape: and thou shalt be sure to find,  
 that, among bookes, the best will yeeld most fruit to thy soule.

Secondly,

Preface to M.  
 Coopers Ser-  
 mons.

Fourre things  
 to be obser-  
 ued in rea-  
 ding.  
 1. Provide  
 the best  
 Bookes.

## THE PREFACE.

Secondly, because the most part are babes in iudgment, and discerning of spiritual things (though euery soole be wise in his own eyes) not knowing what is fit and profitable, & what is hurtfull & inconuenient: let me intreat thee to aske counsell, & aduise of the godly learned, especially of thine owne Pastour (if God haue blessed thee with an able & faithfull man) or, otherwise, of him whose publik ministry may giue thee hope, that his sence are exercised in the discerning of good and euill. No wise man will receive a writing for the least plot of ground, without the counsel of some learned Lawyer; nor a medicine for his body, without the aduise of some learned Physitian; and wilt thou, not asking direction of some godly Diuine, aduenture vpon a booke, containing perhaps some damnable error (which may conuay from thee thy heavenly inheritance) or some deadly poison, which may kill thy soule? Do it not. Thirdly, remember that nothing is more hard, then to be constant in holy exercises. For therein, the subtiltie and rage of our inuisible enemy Satan doth most notably appeare. Herein the frailtie and corruption of flesh and blood will bewray it selfe. Here, profit and pleasure; businesse and idleness, matters at home and matters abroad, company, and a thousand occasions will lie in our way, as so many lions, to let and hinder vs. Therefore herein gird vp the loines of thy minde, put vpon thee the whole Armour of God, & daily renew thy couenant (of redeeming the time) made with God & thine owne conscience. Thou seest, that men who are most greedie of the world, will not misse (scarce once in a yeere) their ordinary houres of eating and drinking: Why then shouldest thou bee so fickle and vnfaithfull, in forgetting and omitting the times of reading and praying to God? Fourthly, when thou hast begunne a good booke, giue it not ouer, till thou haue ended it: and when thou hast read it once ouer, let it not bee tedious vnto thee to reade it ouer againe and againe. For, thou shalt finde the second reading more fruitfull then the first, and the third more fruitfull then the second: and so the oftner the better. This is a great vanitie and euill sickness among men, that if they haue once seene the title of a booke, and the Authors name, & read two or three leaues thereof, it is cast as their heeles euery after, as if they had attained all that could bee learned by it, when they can name the title and Author of it. Wherefore for this point, mark the course & maner of men, in the keeping & increasing of their bodily strength: Though they eat their fill of steepe

Heb. 5. 13.

<sup>2</sup> In chusing vs the aduice of the godly learned.

<sup>3</sup> Be constant in keeping of houres.

<sup>4</sup> Read a good booke thorow, and read it often ouer.

## THE PREFACE.

kinde of meat to day, yet they come with great desire, and fresh appetite to the same againe within a day or two; yea often times the same day: otherwise it argueth either an extreme weakenesse or an intollerable daintinesse of the stomacke. Here perhaps thou wilt aske what bookes beside the holy Bible, I would commend vnto thee. Wherein though I see some difficultie, because it cannot be done without comparisons (which are counted odious) yet for thy good, I will not spare to shew my poore opinion; which is, That no one Author (that I haue read) hath set downe the summe and grounds of Christian Religion more holily and happily, for the capacitie and edifying of all sorts, then this present Writer. For this cause, I specially recommend him to thee; as one, by whom thou maist exceedingly profit, if thou call vpon the name of God through Iesus Christ, and bind thy selfe to diligence and constancie; remembring, that as one dish of meat, well chewed and digested, will comfort nature more then diuers delicacies, that lie raw and vndigested in the stomacke; so one booke often and thorowly read, will doe thy soule more good, then the superficiall sight and tast of a thousand. And so I commend thee to the Lord: who vouchsafeth to giue thee wisdom in all things, for his mercies sake. Blacke Friers,  
the 23. of Iuly.

Thine in the Lord Iesus,

STEPH. EGERTON.

# THE FIRST BOOKE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

WHEREIN THE GROUNDS OF  
our saluation are handled.

*Speakers*

THEOPHILVS. MATTHEVV.

## CHAP. I.

*Of the knowledge of God, who being perfectly iust, and perfectly  
mercifull, doth neuer exercise his mercy, but that also he doth  
exercise his iustice.*

THEOPHILVS.



Oft deare brother, I haue often bin  
desirous to heare from your mouth,  
the whole doctrine of Christian Re-  
ligion, deliuered in a right and exact  
course of teaching; because once I  
heard you treat, both perspicuously  
and briefly of some maine points  
thereof, to my great satisfaction.

*Mat.* If my loue and diligence, in other matters, haue ne-  
uer been wanting to you, (most louing *Theophilus*) perswade  
your selfe, that (at conuenient leisure) I will so much the  
more chearefully fulfill your desire, because the thing is of  
it selfe profitable, and such (I hope) as shall be to mine owne  
edifying. For this is proper to Christian doctrine, that the  
oftner it is handled, the more largely it extendeth her force  
and working in the hearts of the faithfull.

*Theoph.* Go to then: can you now bee at leisure to lay  
foorth vnto me, all the chiefe points (or heads) of Christian  
Religion, in order, as I am determind to aske you? and  
you shall find me diligent to put them in writing, that so  
they may be imparted to my brethren.

*Mat.* Were it so that I wanted leisure, yet I assure you, there  
is no busines, but I would lay it aside to satisfie you in this  
behalf. For, what is there, wherein time can be better spent?

## Concerning God.

*Theoph.* Seeing therefore our speech shall bee of Christian religion, I desire to be taught, what is meant by the name Religion.

*Mat.* Before I answer, I beseech God our heauenly Father, to be present with vs, by his holy Spirit, so that we may neither think nor speake any thing, which shall not tend to the honour of his owne Name, and to the edification of his whole Church. The name (Religion) is deriued of a word that signifieth to bind. And it is a spirituall bond: by the which, men in a holy attonement are vnited to God, and held in his loue & feare; that so at length they may be partakers of his heauenly glory, and of the blessed life. Which no religion can bring to passe but that which is Christian: that is to say; that, whose foundation is laid in Christ.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because that through Christ alone, by faith (not by any merit of ours) we are brought againe into fauour with God (and euen vnited to him, with the closest bond), that so he may be glorified of vs here, and eternally in heauen.

*Theoph.* From whence haue we prooofe of that.

*Mat.* Out of the Word of God; the surest prooofe that is: vpon the truth whereof resteth all Christian doctrine.

*Theoph.* What vnderstandest thou by the Word of God?

*Mat.* The Canonickall bookes of the Bible: whercunto for this cause is giuen the name of holy Scripture.

*Theoph.* How came it to passe, that those bookes were called the Bible?

*Mat.* The Christians of the primitiue Church, after they had gathered the books of the Prophets and Apostles, into one volume, called it (for the excellency therof) *Βιβλία*, in Greeke (that is *Bible*, or *Bookes*) because those books far passe all others. For truly the word of God, in worthinesse and excellency, goeth beyond all the words of men.

*Theoph.* But how may it certainly be proued, that the doctrine, which is contained in those bookes, is the Word of God, seeing that the Prophets & Apostles, who, it is certainly known were men, were the authors and writers of them?

*Mat.* First of all indeede it is necessary, that the holy Ghost, which spake by them, nay whose instruments onely they were, doe engraued that faith in our hearts. Then, that assurance



assurance may be confirmed, by obseruing the speciall excellencie, which is easie to perceiue in those writings, as also the most holy effects which they worke in vs.

*Theoph.* What excellencie doe you meane?

*Mat.* First of all, the maiesty of the spirit of God, which shineth in them most euidently. For euery where there appeare diuine and heauenly things, nothing earthly & fading, or that agreeth with the corrupt affections of the flesh.

Secondly, the consent of all the parts among themselves. For, although they were penned by diuers writers, in sundry places, and at sundry times, yet is there no lesse accord, harmony, and consent betwene them, than if they had agreed together of the matter before.

Finally, the fulfilling of all the prophecies, deliuered long before; yet precisely accomplished, each of them in their proper time. Hence it is that Dauid giueth them most excellent commendation, saying; The words of the Lord are pure words, as the siluer is tried in a fornace of earth, fined seuen fold, I say nothing of their antiquitie; and that not without myracle, they were preserved, among so many enemies which would haue destroyed them, and among such cruell persecutions.

3  
Ier. 23. 12.  
Dan. 9. 24.  
Psal. 12. 6.

*Theoph.* But what holy effects do they worke in vs?

*Mat.* This generally we may marke, that alwaies there was (as to this day there is) a Church, which hath bene gathered together by the authoritie of the holy Scripture: that is to say, a company of men, of diuers ages, sexes, and conditions, which worshipped God according to the instructions and doctrine of that Scripture: a good part of which in all ages, haue sealed the same with their blood. But the speciall, or particular effects are, that they rauish the reader, and enforce him to the reuerence of God, no otherwise, than as if God himselfe did speake.

Also, that by the reading of them, our hearts are touched with an earnest feeling of our sinnes.

Last of all, that they lift vp our minds aboue all heauens: kindle within vs a desire of a better life, & cause vs that (in comparison thereof) we doe easily despise all other things.

All which are not done by any writings of men: bee they neuer so artificially handled. Therefore the Apostles

Heb. 4. 13.

to the Hebrews faith, that the word of God is lively, mighty in operation, and piercing more than any two-edged sword, and that it doth reach euen to the diuiding asunder of the soule and spirit, of the ioynts and marrow.

*Theoph.* Verily, these are most strong arguments, to proue the truth of Gods word. But, there be some which affirme, that all the authoritie and credit of it dependeth vpon the Church.

*Mat.* They deale herein, as if one should say, that the light of the Sun hangeth vpon mans testimony. For, as the Sun doth not cease to shine, though all men were blind; so the truth of Gods word is no whit bettered, or impaired, by the applause or disallowance of men. Moreouer, how can it bee, that the authoritie of the Word of God should depend vpon the allowance or consent of the Church? seeing that the Church it selfe borroweth all her authority of the word, as it were of her foundation. For, it is built vpon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.

Ephes. 2. 20.

*Theoph.* But they say, that in this place, it is not meant of the truth of the word in it selfe; but of the meane whereby it is apprehended and receiued of men. Which they affirme to hang vpon the testimony and allowance of the Church. To which purpose, they alledge this saying of a certaine Father; I should not haue beleued the Gospel, if the authoritie of the Church had not mooued me.

Aug. contra  
epist. fund.  
Manich.

*Mat.* This sentence maketh not for them. For, this was the mind of that holy man; that, being a stranger from the faith, hee was mooued by the authoritie of the Church to embrace the Gospel: and that after by the working of the holy Ghost, hee was confirmed in that faith. Which he doth a little before declare, in these words; The Church first calleth to beleue that, which yet wee are not able to see: that so, being made stronger in faith, we may come to vnderstand that which we beleue; God himselfe, now (not men) inwardly strengthening and enlightening our minde. Which thing I doubt not but it is true: namely, that the witnesse, which the Church giueth to the word of God, doth not a little moue vs to embrace it. But then onely this is, when our faith is beginning. For when it is come to any age, and that wee our  
selues

selues by reading and hearing, of the word, haue tasted of that truth; then wee belecue, not by the testimonie of the Church, but by that which the holy Ghost sealeth in our hearts. Inſomuch, as if the Church ſhould then teach vs a doctrine diuers from that, wee would not giue our conſents vnto it. This ſhall be made plaine by the example of the Samaritans. Theſe, hearing the report of the woman, with whom the Lord had ſpoken, (namely, that he was the Chriſt) beleued. But, after that themſelues had heard him, they ſaid vnto the woman: Now wee beleue, not any more for thy ſaying. For wee haue heard him our ſelues, and doe know, that this is indeede the Chriſt, the Sauour of the world.

Ioh. 4. 42.

*Theoph.* This example bringeth no ſmall light to this doubt. But hitherto ſufficiently of the truth and authoritie of the word of God: now let vs in a few words conſider, what it doth conteine.

*Theoph.* It hath in it at large, whatſoever concerneth the glory of God for our good and ſaluation.

*Theoph.* By what meanes doth it teach vs to attaine ſaluation?

*Mat.* By the true knowledge of God, and of Ieſus Chriſt; the which it teacheth.

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore firſt intreate of the knowledge of God: and after wee will ſpeake of Chriſt, in the proper place. What doe the holy Scriptures teach vs concerning God?

*Mat.* Three heads or principall things, whereby he is diſtinguiſhed from all fained gods, beſides thoſe which wee do know by naturall inſtinct giuen vs of God, and by conſideration of the creatures, namely, that God is a ſpirituall eſſence, eternall, of infinite wiſedome, goodnes and power.

Rom. 1. 20.

*Theoph.* Rehearse the firſt of thoſe three.

*Mat.* That, in one diuine eſſence, there be three diſtinct perſons, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost.

Of the Trinitie.

The Father indeede is the beginning of the Godhead: but that is in reſpect of the order of the perſons. For, in the Godhead it ſelfe, we may not ſeek for firſt or laſt.

The Sonne is the Wiſedome of the Father, begotten of him before the world.

The

The holy Ghost is the infinite power proceeding from the Father and the Sonne.

Now these three persons are distinct one from the other, not onely by those properties wherein the end of them cannot communicate or partake with the other, but also by the difference of their actions. For, the Scripture ascribeth to the Father, the beginning of working; to the Sonne, wisdom and counsell; and to the holy Ghost, verue and power. Neuerthelesse, they bee (to all respects) equall in eternity, dignitie, and power: because there is one most vndiuided diuine essence common to them, and are therefore one God. Howbeit, so often as there is mention made of the father, together with the son, or together with the holy Ghost, the name of God is then peculiarly giuen to the father (as to the first person of the Deitie); and yet nothing is diminished from the Godhead of the Sonne or of the holy Ghost: but herein the vnitie of the essence is retained, and respect is had to the order of the persons. Hence it is, that the Sonne is called the Sonne of God, and the spirit, is called the spirit of God. But whensoever the name of God is put indefinitely (that is, without an addition of persons) the Sonne and the Spirit are no lesse noted by it, than the Father. As when the Scripture saith; Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serue. To the King eternall, immortall, inuisible, to God onely wise, be honour and glory for euer and euer.

*Theoph.* Verily, this doctrine is beyond all the reach and vnderstanding of man.

*Mat.* It is indeed: and yet to be beleueed; as that which God in his word hath reuealed for our saluation: which cannot stand without it.

*Theo.* In what place of Scripture is this doctrine taught?

*Mat.* It may be gathered out of diuers places: but most easily it is declared by this of *Iohn*; There be three which beare witness in heauen, the Father, the Word, and the holy spirit: and these three are one. When hee saith three, hee noteth the distinction of the persons: when hee saith one, he sheweth the vnitie of the essence.

*Theoph.* What is the reason that the Sonne of God is called word, and the third person, spirit.

*Mat.*

*Iob* 3. 16.  
*Gcn.* 1. 2.

*Mat.* 4. 14.

*2. Tim.* 1. 17.

*I. Iohn* 5. 7.

*Mat.* To the Sonne, that name is attributed, by a similitude. For, as speech is the declarer of the minde in men; so, by his Word, doth God make himselfe knowne vnto vs. Concerning the third person, that also is called the Spirit, by a similitude borrowed from men: that we may vnderstand it to be, as it were, a breath comming out of the mouth of God: not such as vanisheth, but which is his power spread ouer all things, and yet abideth alwaies in himselfe. The Prophet doth not obscurely expresse both the similitudes, in these words; By the word of the Lord were the heauens made, and by the breath of his mouth all the host of them. Wherein he doth plainly teach; that, the Father, by his eternal wisdom, which is the Sonne and by his infinite power, which is the holy Ghost, did make all things. psalm. 33. 6.

*Theoph.* Hitherto enough of the Trinitie For, the more deepe'ly the sharpenesse of mans wit striueth to looke into it, the more it is blunted with the greatnesse of that misterie. Now, therefore, declare the other head of the knowledge of God.

*Mat.* It teacheth, that God did not onely in six daies by his immeasurable power make all things; but also that they are still preserued and gouerned by his wisdom and prouidence; and that his hand is neuer from the worke: so that no one of all the things done in heauen or earth, commeth to passe by chance, or fortune. For the Scripture witnesseth:

That the Lord sendeth thunders, Winds and tempests. psalm. 29. 3.

That he thundereth with his voyce, and saith to the snow, Be vpon the earth. Iob. 37. 5. 6.

That he couereth the heauens with clouds, and prepareth the raine for the earth. psalm. 147. 8.

That he deuiceth the sea, when the waues thereof doe roare. Isai. 51. 15.

That he giueth meat vnto all flesh. psalm. 136. 39.

That he maketh peace, and createth euill. Isai. 45. 7.

That he stilleth and maketh aliuie: that hee bringeth downe to the graue, and bringeth vp againe. 1. sam. 2. 6.

That he maketh the wound, and bindeth it vp; smiteth, and maketh whole. Iob. 3. 18.

That

Dan. 2. 21.

That he changeth times and seasons, taketh away kings, and setteth vp kings.

Psalme. 33. 16

That he ordereth warres, and appointeth the victory.

Psalme 75. 7

That he throweth downe, and lifteth vp.

Prou. 16. 9.

That he directeth the steps of men.

Prou. 16. 1.

That he guideth the answer of the tongue.

Prou. 21. 1.

That he turneth the hearts of men at his pleasure.

Prou. 16. 33

Finally, the prouidence of God leauech no place for Fortune. For, *Salomon* affirmeth, that euen the whole disposition of the Lot is of the Lord. It is plaine therefore, that God ordereth all things, but is not busied or turmoiled with any thing.

*Theoph.* Now remaineth the third point of the knowledge of God.

Of Gods  
iustice.

Iames 1. 17

*Mat.* That God is perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull. For seeing he is of an infinite essence, all his proprieties and vertues be also infinite. For, they be essentiall in him: with whom (*saith Iames*) there is no change, or shadow of alteration: That is to say, that, in God there is nothing subiect to increase, change, or lessening. Whensoever therefore, he doth exercise his mercie, he doth likewise exercise his iustice, punishing the guiltie and offenders with deserued punishment. For this cause, when *Moses* had largely in these words commended the mercy of God, *The Lord God, mercifull and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in goodnesse*: straightway after he addeth, *not making the wicked innocent.*

Exod. 34. 6. 7

## CHAP. II.

*Of the knowledge of Man: who being a most miserable sinner, is before God guiltie of eternall death.*

THEOPHILVS.

Seeing God acquiteth not the guiltie, it is so far off that by the knowledge of him, man is lifted vp into the hope of saluation, that, cleane contrariwise, he perceiuech his condemnation to be prooued and confirmed; because hee aboundeth with innumerable both infirmities and sinnes, for the which he is found guilty before the most iust iudgement seate of almighty God.

Of mens free-  
will.

*Mat.* Man is not onely, as thou saiest, defiled with many



ny vices and infirmities, but also by his owne nature : First, an enemy of God, Secondly, full of wickednesse. Thirdly, a seruant of sinne, that is to say, such an one as hath neither will nor power to doe well.

*Theoph.* Thou doest indeed very much throw downe man.

*Mat.* I doe not : but God himselfe, in these words ; The Genes. 6. 7. wickednesse of man is great in the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are onely euill continually. Moreouer, in the same Chapter, he teacheth vs, Verse 3. that man is nothing else but flesh.

And *S. Paul* plainly affirmeth, that the vnderstanding Rom. 8. 7. of the flesh, is enmitie against God : because, saith he, it is not subiect to the Law of God : for indeede it cannot be.

The same also he affirmeth in another place, when hee saith, that we are strangers from God, and enemies, our mind being set vpon euill workes : as if he should say, that the enmitie hid in the heart, was betrayed by euill deeds. Col. 1. 21.

In another place also the same Apostle saith, that we are Rom. 7. 14. carnall, sold vnder sinne : that is, that wee are the bond-slaves of sinne.

Yea, hee proceedeth so farre as to say, that of our selues 2. Cor. 3. 5. we are not sufficient to thinke, much lesse able to doe, that which is good.

*Theoph.* But was this the mind of the Apostle, to shew that all generally be bond-men to sinne ? Rom. 3. 9.

*Mat.* Yea verily. For, speaking of the naturall corruption of man, out of the testimony of *Dauid*, he saith plainly ; Wee haue prooued before, that both Iewes and Gentiles be vnder sinne ; as it is written. There is none iust, no, nor one : there is not any which vnderstandeth, or which seeketh after God. They haue all gone out of the way, they haue beene made altogether vnprofitable ; There is none that doth good, no not one. Psalme 14. 3. & 53. 3.

The faithfull, indeed, be exempted out of that number : but yet, not because they are not such by nature ; but because God (such is his mercy) amendeth our wickednesse and corruption, by the benefit of regeneration, whereby he worketh in vs both the Will and power to doe well ; Phil. 2. 13. as in the proper place shall be more largely declared. But all the vnbeleeuers, as they be vnprofitable to any good worke,

worke, so they are carried with great violence vnto euill

*Theoph.* But the thing it selfe seemeth to speake otherwise. For there be (as there euer haue beene) some, which haue beene endued with most excellent gifts.

*Mat.* 7. 18.

*Mat.* The Scripture saith, It cannot bee, that an ill tree should bring forth good fruit. It may indeede sometimes bring forth such, as bee goodly to see too; which notwithstanding are not good. So also may wee finde many infidels, which doe works hauing a beautifull shew, but such as cannot be good indeede: for the heart, which God specially looketh vnto is corrupt and vncleane: for it cannot any way be made cleane, but by faith. Therefore the Apostle saith; Whatsoeuer is not of faith is sin.

*Actes.* 15. 9.  
*Rom.* 4. 23.

*Theoph.* Wherein standeth that vncleanesse of the heart?

*Mat.* In that doing these beautifull works, they bee neither touched with the loue nor feare of God; and therefore doe not thinke of yeelding him obedience: neither is it maruell, seeing they know him not: Whom, notwithstanding, no man can loue or feare, before he doe know him.

*Theoph.* What is it then, that moueth them to doe those works which are so faire in shew?

*Mat.* Some, because they be not naturally giuen to the vices which they leaue.

Others, because they be restrained by a slauiſh feare of Gods iustice: or else for that they dreame to deserue something at the hands of God.

Others, for feare of Lawes: or least they should doe any thing: that might hinder their prosperitie.

Or else their lusts doe strue as the windes, so that the stronger preuaileth ouer the rest, and bridleth them from breaking forth into action. As for example; A vaine-glorious man will make a shew to be liberall; to the end, hee may serue the turne of his ambition. On the other side, a couetous man, that he may spare charges, will set light by honor; although his minde within be set on fire with ambition. A proud man will be bountifull, to get praise among the common people. She that feareth the reproch of the people, although her minde be defiled with vnchaste lusts, yet outwardly will be chaste. Finally, the vn-  
fainthfull

faithfull neuer respect the glory of God, when they thinke to doe good workes. Which, neuerthelesse, is as it were the very life of good workes: so as if it be wanting, they cannot be acceptable to God.

*Theoph.* If therefore all the goodly deeds, which the vnfaithfull doe, be of no account with God, he shall be in no better case, which carrieth himselfe modestly, and keepeth vnder the lusts of the flesh, than he which passeth away all his life dissolurely.

*Mat.* No verily, nor so: for God rewardeth those works, yet onely in this life. And oftentimes also he giueth them such things, in respect whereof, they did their good deeds: as health, quiet life, praise, good report among men, and such like. Therefore our Sauour Christ saith, that the Scribes and Pharisees, in that they prayed and fasted to be praised of men, had their reward.

Math. 6. 18.

Moreouer, the state of such as in this life haue behaued themselues modestly, shall be easier in the day of iudgement, than of the other.

Math. 11. 12.

*Theo.* How can it be, that God will reward works which he liketh not? being such as were not done for his sake?

*Mat.* Thereby he declareth, how pleasing a thing true obedience is to him, seeing he rewardeth the very shadow of it. Adde this herevnto, that he hath regard vnto those works, not as they come from vncleane persons, but from himselfe.

*Theoph.* In what sense saiest thou that those works come from God?

*Mat.* I say, that God, to the end that order and euen disposing of things may be kept in the world, doth bridle the wickednesse of some, and so maketh them fit to follow vertue. In which respect, we feare not (in common speech) to say, that such men are of a good nature: whereby we meane, that euen from the beginning of their life, God gaue them some speciall grace. Without which grace, there is no doubt, but that all men be such as they are liuely pictured out by the Apostle. For after he hath said that there is not one which doth good: straight way he addeth, their throat is an open sepulcher: they haue vsed their tongues to deceit: the poison of Aspes is vnder their lips:

Rom. 3. 12.  
Psalme 5. 6.

Pſalm. 10. 7.  
Iſaiah 59. 7.

Whoſe mouth is full of curſing and bitterneſſe: Their feete are ſwift to ſhed bloud. Deſtruction, and calamitie are in their waies: and the way of peace they haue not knowne: The feare of God is not before their eies. Which teſtimonies are gathered by him, out of ſundry places of the old Teſtament, that hee might procure himſelfe the more authoritie and credit, touching this matter.

Pſalm 33. 2.

*Theoph.* But how could it be, that man the moſt excellent creature of all other, ſhould be ſo much corrupted?

Gen. 1. 27.  
Gen. 3. 6.

*Mat.* It was not by his firſt nature (for hee was made after the Image of God, that is, like vnto him); but by originall ſinne: wherewith *Adam*, by his diſobedience in eating the forbidden fruit, infected himſelfe and all mankind.

*Theoph.* Tell mee what the Image of God is; wherein thou ſaiſt the firſt man was created: as alſo that originall ſinne, wherewith mankind was afterward tainted?

Of the Image  
of God.

*Mat.* The Image of God conſiſted in this, that the vnderſtanding of man was enlightened with the true knowledge of God, and of the worſhip due vnto him; and that he was indued with an vpright and good will, diſpoſed to the obedience of God. Now, it is called the Image of God, becauſe in thoſe excellent gifts, man did reſemble the wiſedome, goodneſſe, and power of his Creator. But when *Adam*, by rebellion, fell from this his eſtate, hee was deprived of this Image, and withall did put on the image of the diuell. That is to ſay, he was ſpoiled of thoſe notable gifts, in ſtead whereof, came in all manner of vices. As,

- 1 The ignorance of God, and of his ſeruiſe.
- 2 Wickedneſſe: for he hated vertue, and loued ſin.
- 3 Impotency, or lacke of power to al goodnes.

Of originall  
ſinne.

And this is that blot of originall ſinne: which being in vs, like a fire of wickedneſſe and luſt, doth continually breath, or ſend forth the fruits and effects of it; to wit, vngodlineſſe, and vnrightcouſneſſe.

*Theoph.* But that corruption, it ſeemeth, ſhould be accounted rather a puniſhment of *Adams* ſinne, than ſinne it ſelfe?

Rom. 5. 12.

*Mat.* It is doubtleſſe, both a puniſhment of ſinne, and the fountaine and wel-ſpring of all ſins: Neuertheleſſe, it is alſo ſinne, and worthy of death, as *Paul* ſaith; As by one man ſin came into the world, and death by ſinne: ſo alſo death went

went ouer all men, through him, in whom we haue all sinned; that is to say, are infected with originall sinne.

*Theoph.* But how could Adam make al his posteritie partakers of that infection of sinne?

*Mat.* By generation. For he could not beget any children, but such as were like himselte: euen as a viper bringeth foorth none but vipers.

Now it is called originall sinne, that it may appeare we are corrupted, not by any wickednes taken to vs: but that we do bring with vs an inbred corruption from our mothers wombe. Which very thing *Dauid* confelleth of him selfe: Behold I was borne in iniquitie, and in sinne hath my mother conceived me. *Psalm. 51. 5.*

CHAP. III.

*Of the knowledge of Christ: who, hauing satisfied for vs the perfect righteousness of God, hath opened vs a way to his infinite mercy, whereby at length we may come to eternall life.*

THEOPHILVS.

**L**et vs repeate the order of our former speech. Forasmuch as God in no sort can cease to be iust, nor shew any mercy, but that which may stand with his iustice; and that man is so corrupt, as hath beene proued by thee, out of the Scripture, he can looke for nothing else, but the wrath of God and eternall death.

*Mat.* God himselte hath giuen the sentence. For he saith by the Prophets; Cursed be euery one, that continueth not in all things written in the booke of the Law, to doe them. *Dent. 27. 10.*

And againe; The soule that sinneth, that same shall die: which things are to be vnderstood, as well of the eternall death, as of the naturall; as is declared by the Apostle *Iohn* *Ezech. 18. 4.* But in Christ, there is remedie offered vs. Therefore the knowledge of him is in the holy Scriptures ioyned with the knowledge, thereby to attaine eternall saluation. *Reuel. 21. 3.* *Iohn. 17. 3.*

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore speake of the knowledge of Christ. And first of all, declare thou those things which concerne his person: and when wee shall see what remedie is brought vs by him, to attaine saluation.

*Mat.* Concerning the person of Iesus Christ, he is the eternall Sonne of God, which tooke vpon him the nature of the person of Christ. *Of the person of Christ.*

of man, that is to say, was made man in soule and bodie like to vs in all things, sinne onely excepted. Therefore the nature of God and man are so ioyned together in him, that they make but one person. Hee hath also but one Father, and one Mother: a Father, in respect of his Godhead, and a Mother in respect of his manhood, namely, the Virgine Marie, of whose substance hee was conceived by the power of the holy Ghost.

*Theoph.* Proue all these things briefly, out of the Word of God.

Gal. 4. 4.

*Mat.* Saint Paul, speaking of Christ, saith, When the fullness of time was come, God sent his Sonne made of a woman. When he sayeth, that God sent his Sonne, hee declareth, that Christ is the second person of the Trinitie, and therefore God: which also elsewhere hee confirmeth in these words; *Who is God ouer all, Blessed for euer.* But when he addeth, *made of a woman*, he somewhat plainly notifieth him to be very man. Which also he affirmeth elsewhere in these words; there is one God, and one Mediatour of God and man, the man Christ Iesus. From the which places, wee conclude that Christ is very God and Man. For although each nature hath it owne proprietie remaining distinct to it selfe; yet to the end we may vnderstand, that in Christ they be ioyned together by a most neere bond, so as they make but one person, the Scriptures oftentimes say that of the diuinitie, which agreeth to the humanitie. As when it is said, that God hath purchased his Church, with his owne blood: and contrariwise, those things are said of the humanitie, which appertaine to the diuinitie: whereunto that saying of Christ is to be referred; No man ascendeth vp into heauen, but he which came downe from heauen, euen the Son of man which is in heauen.

Acts 20. 28.

Iohn 3. 13.

*Theoph.* Declare a little more plainly what thou meanest by this, when thou saidst, that each nature hath his property remaining distinct to it selfe.

*Mat.* The Diuinitie was not changed into the humanity: for it remaineth eternall, infinite, and impassible. Againe, the humanitie was not turned into the Godhead. For, before the death & resurrection of Christ; it was possible; such a nature as might suffer. And before, as also after death, it

was



was created and finite ; which at one time could not bee in diuers places: for this is contrarie to the nature of a true bodie.

*Theo.* This doctrine, againe, is beyond the reach of man.

*Mat.* It is indeede : as also *Paul* himselfe confirmeth in these words ; Without controuersie, great is the mysterie <sup>1. Tim. 3. 6.</sup> of godlinesse, God manifested in the flesh.

*Theoph.* Hitherto we haue heard sufficiently of the person of Christ; now let vs speake of the remedy brought by him to our saluation.

*Mat.* He hath fully satisfied the iudgement of God for our sins, and thereby redeemed vs from euerlasting death, and withall made vs capable of the heauenly life : if so bee that we be partakers of his gifts. Of the reme-  
die brought  
by Christ to  
our saluation.

*Theoph.* There come three things to my mind, whereof I will aske thee.

1 How Christ hath satisfied the iudgement of God for our finnes.

2 How he maketh vs partakers of the heauenly life.

3 And why it is necessarie that his gifts should be made ours. Now answer to the first.

*Mat.* To the end this may the more easily bee vnderstood, we must remember that whereof wee spake before ; namely, that God hath pronounced a curse against all such as transgresse his law, and that wee in two respects haue broken it: to wit, by leauing vndone the good which hee requireth, and by doing the euil which hee forbideth. Now Christ hath prouided a remedie for both: For while he was in this earth, he did fully and perfectly fulfill the Law for vs. Moreover, he suffered the most shamefull death of the Crosse, that he might endure the full punishment due to our sins. By which meanes, hauing abundantly satisfied the perfect iustice of God for vs, hee maketh a way to his mercy, whereby we may obtaine forgiveness of finnes. And in this sense it is said : That wee are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ ; that Christ vpon the tree did beare our sins in his bodie ; That the blood of Christ doth cleanse vs from all sinne. 1. Pet. 1. 19.  
1. Pet. 1. 24.  
1. Iohn. 1. 17

*Theoph.* I cannot wonder enough at the exceeding great loue of God towards vs, in that he gaue his most

dearely beloued Sonne to the death, for our redemption.

*Mat.* Adde this, Which were his enemies: which also is diligently obserued by the Apostle in these words; Doubtlesse one will scarcely die for a righteous man: but for one that is profitable to him, peraduenture some man will die. But God commendeth his loue towards vs, in that when we were yet sinners, Christ died for vs. From whence hee draweth his most comfortable conclusion; If, when wee were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Sonne: much more, being reconciled, shall wee bee saved by his life.

Rom. 3. 7.

Rom. 5. 10.

*Theoph.* But could the iudgement of God be no otherwise satisfied for our sinnes, except his beloued Sonne had taken vpon him our nature, therein to suffer death, the death (I say) of the crosse?

*Mat.* No. For man, which hath offended the infinite Maiestie of God, doth deserue infinite punishment, that is to say, eternall death: which could not be suffered and overcome of any, but of the eternall and infinite Sonne of God. Moreover, the iustice of God requireth this, that the same nature which had sinned, should suffer the punishment of sin. But because God could not suffer, and man could not overcome death, it was necessary that the redeemer should be very God, and very man, to do both. Wherein also it is to be marked; how neede an attonement God hath entred into with vs, by Christ; in whom the parties at variance be so inseparably ioyned together. Whereby it is come to passe that God hath turned the fall of man to his great good: for thereupon he hath taken occasion to vnite vs more neerely with himselfe. Wherefore, where sinne was increased, there grace hath abounded much more through Christ.

Rom. 5. 20.

*Theoph.* Hitherto wee haue heard sufficiently of the first point; namely, how Christ hath satisfied the iudgement of God for our sinnes: now let vs come to the other, which is, by what right wee may claime to our selues euerlasting life.

*Mat.* By a double right, through Christ. First, because for vs he hath fulfilled the whole Law: and God hath promised life to such as fulfill it. Secondly, by the right of inheritance. For, after that Christ is made ours, wee are not onely

Leuit. 18. 5.

onely made partakers of his spirituall riches (namely his perfect righteousness and obedience, whereby we are accounted iust before God) but also of his dignitie, to wit, in that with him we are reputed and taken for the children of God.

Therefore *Paul* saith, If we be sonnes, we are also heires, *Rom. 8. 17.* euen heires of God, and heires together with Christ And *Colos. 1. 12.* againe, in another place, he calleth eternall life the lot or inheritance of the Saints: and thus we see that in Christ be comprised both the rights, by which we lay claime to eternall life for our selues.

*Theoph.* Therefore, in Christ alone, we finde all things necessary to saluation?

*Mat.* Yea verily. For, in him there is righteousness, and the fulnesse of life: & without him, man (full of sin) findeth nothing but euerlasting malediction and curse. Therefore *Ad. 4. 12.* *Peter* saith, that, neither is saluation in any other; and that there is no other name vnder heaven giuen among men, whereby wee may be saued. For this cause also, the name *Iesus* was giuen him from heauen: by the which, his office is plainly set forth: that is to say, all that which he hath performed for our saluation, and doth stil performe.

*Theoph.* Go to therefore, tell mee what the name *Iesus* Christ signifieth, as also of whom it was giuen him.

*Mat.* The name *Iesus* signifieth *Saviour*: and an Angell <sup>What the name Iesus signifieth.</sup> gaue it to the Sonne of God: because (as hee himselve expounded it) hee should saue his people from their sinnes. *Mat. 1. 21.* Concerning the name *Christ*, it is to be vnderstood, that <sup>Of the name Christ.</sup> in times past, in the old Testament, Christ was figured or shadowed in the Kings, Prophets, and Priests, who when they were consecrated, were annointed with oyle, which signified the gifts of the holy Ghost. Now the redeemer *Dan. 9. 25.* promised, was in Hebrew, called *Messias*: but in Greeke it is traslated by the word *Christ*, which in *Latin* signifieth *Annointed*. By which name, we are taught, that hee is the chiefe.

1. King,
2. Prophet,
3. Priest.

*Luke. 1. 33.*  
*Deut. 18. 18.*  
*Psal. 110. 4.*

Now, he was annointed not with common visible oyle,

B 4

but

but with the grace of the holy Ghost, and that most fully, that from him, as from the head, it might be poured into each member, namely into all the faithfull; inasmuch as they also together with him are made Kings, Prophets, and Priests. Now the name *Christ* (being a Greeke word) hath beene retained in all tongues, because the Apostles themselves wrote in Greeke. This therefore is the cause, why the name *Christ* was giuen vnto him, as also why all the faithfull are called Christians; euen because they be partakers of his anointing, and therefore of his kingdom, prophetic, and priesthood.

Reu. 1. 6.

Of the offices  
of Christ.

*Theoph.* First therefore wee must see, how Christ performed the offices of King, Prophet, and Priest: and afterward how he communicateth the same with the faithfull;

1. Of King.

*Mat.* He executeth the office of a King, when, by his diuine power, he diuined vs from the Tyranny of our enemies, the diuell, sinne, and death; whome he ouercame, that he might take from them (into his owne hands) the right & interest, which they had in vs, & so subiect vs to his kingdom: which indeede he doth continually exercise in vs, while himselfe ruleth vs by the scepter of his word, and the power of his spirit. Hee executed the office of a Prophet, in that he declared all the will of God, vnto vs, by his word: he gaue vs also the holy Ghost, by whose helpe it might both be vnderstood of vs, and wee yeeld our consents vnto it. This office he also exerciseth euery day, while, by the ministrie of the word, and working of the spirit, he cauieth vs daily to profit and goe forward in that knowledge.

2. Of Prophet

3. Of Priest.

Finally, he executed the office of a Priest, when vpon the crosse he offered his body & blood for vs to God the father, that he might be a satisfaction for our sins. The execution of which office hath place also at this day, in that he maketh intercession for vs. Now, this Priesthood of Christ is the truth & fulfilling of all the sacrifices of the old Testament.

Reu. 1. 6.

*Theoph.* Let vs now speake of our kingdom, priesthood, and prophetship.

*Mat.* Wee are spiritually kings in Christ that wee may ouercome the diuell and sinne.

1. Pet. 2. 9.

We are Priests; through him to offer vp an acceptable sacrifice of praise to God.

Wee

We are Prophets; that, being taught the truth, wee may teach others, and open to them the mysteries of the kingdom of Heauen. Act. 2. 17.

*Theoph.* It hath bene sufficiently declared, how Christ hath deliuered vs from condemnation, as also by what meanes hee hath made vs fit to attaine eternall life. Now the third point remaineth; namely, why it is necessary, that his gifts should be made ours.

*Mat.* Because, otherwise, they shall no way helpe vs to the satisfying of the perfect iustice of God: euen as other mens riches auaille nothing to deliuer vs out of debt, except they become ours.

*Theoph.* How therefore may his gifts become ours?

*Mat.* If we be made one with him. For, by the benefit of our vnion with Christ of that vnion, wee are made partakers of all his spirituall graces, and riches; which are no lesse imputed vnto vs before God, than if they were ours by nature. For this cause the Apostle saith, that we are, by Christ, reconciled in that body of his flesh, through death. By which words of his, he meaneth, that the merit of Christs death pertaineth not to any, but vnto such as be grafted into his body, and are made his members. Col. 1. 23.

*Theoph.* Can no man therefore be partaker of Christs gifts, except he be made one with him?

*Mat.* He cannot: Euen as a woman cannot be partaker of the riches and honor of some great man, except shee be ioyned with him in marriage, so that they become one body and one flesh: the members also cannot draw life from the head, if they be not ioyned with it. Therefore, there is no true partaking of Christ, except there be an vnion with him. For this cause, therefore, Christ said to the Capernaits; Vnlesse ye eate the flesh of the Sonne of man and drinke his blood, yee shall haue no life in you. In which words he plainly sheweth, that wee are not partakers of his gifts vnto saluation, except wee be neerely coupled with his humanity, as meate and drinke are ioyned with our body; which of all others is a most neere vnion. For meat and drinke, when they are digested in our stomacks are so turned into our substance, that they cannot be distinguished or discerned (much lesse separated) from it: Ioh. 6. 53.

*Theoph.*

Eph. 5. 32.

*Theoph.* This doctrine also is about the capacitie of man.  
*Mat.* It is indeed. Wherefore *Paul*, speaking of it, saith, that it is a great mystery. Now if wee can neuer so little behold the bodie of the sonne, but our eyes will dazel: how can our minds pearce to that inaccessible light of the diuine maiestie, to conceiue his heavenly maiesties? such as be the points which wee haue handled.

- 1 Concerning the Trinitie,
- 2 Of the vnion and two natures in Christ,
- 3 And of coupling the faithfull, with the humane nature of Christ.

It is therefore our duety, rather holily to beleue these three fundamentall points, or beginnings of Christian Religion, then curiously to examine them by the rule of our Reason,

## CHAP. IIII.

*Of Faith by the which, we are made one with Christ, and so be partakers of all his gifts.*

## THEOPHILVS.

**H**itherto I haue heard, First, that God, Who is perfectly Iust, doth no way absolue the guiltie. Secondly, that men, which are most miserable sinners, are, before the iustice of God, guiltie of eternall death. Thirdly that Iesus Christ, by his death, hath satisfied the exact righteousnesse of God: the which his death is imputed to vs; that so being discharged and freed from condemnation, we may be partakers of euermlasting life: if so be that we bee vnited with him. It remaineth therefore that I vnderstand, how we are vnited (or made one) with Christ?

*Mat.* By faith: as hee himselfe testifieth in the prayer which he made to God for all the faithfull, in these words;  
 Ioh. 17. 26. *Father, I pray thee for such as shall beleue in me, that they al may be one, as thou (O Father) art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in vs.*

Whereunto also that saying of *Paul* is to be referred, that  
 Ephe. 3. 17 Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith. And hereupon it is,  
 Act. 13. 39. that these sentences be often repeated in the Scriptures,

- 1 That euery one which beleueth in him, is absolued and discharged,



*The first Booke.*

2 Is made the childe of God.

John. 1. 12.

3 Doth not perish, but hath everlasting life.

John. 3. 16.

In which places, those things bee attributed to faith, which wee receiue of Christ alone; to the end wee may vnderstand, that both hee & his gifts are communicated to vs by faith.

*Theoph.* Thou hast touched a little concerning the righteousness of faith: which I desire to haue declared by thee, somewhat more at large. For I perceiue that *Paul* often-times speaketh of it.

*Mat.* To be iustified before God, is to bee accounted iust that is to say, without blot, and vnreprovable. Now *Paul* doth often handle this point: because it is one of the speciall grounds of our faith. For no man can please God, but hee that is iustified.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because that as God is perfectly iust and holy, so hee loueth holinesse, and iustice: but, contrariwise, hee hateth vnrighteousnesse. And therefore we can haue no fellowship with him, to be partakers of his heauenly glory, except wee be perfectly righteous. Therefore he saith, that no vncleane thing shall enter into the holy Citie. Reuel. 21. 27

*Theoph.* How then are wee iustified, or made righteous before God?

*Mat.* In the Scriptures, there be two kinds of righteousness set forth to vs: which also do very much differ the one from the other. These are,

- 1 The righteousness of the Law, and
- 2 The righteousness of faith.

But the holy Scriptures do teach vs, that we cannot bee iustified by the former, which is of the Law: to the end we might flie to the other, which is of faith.

*Theoph.* Declare vnto mee, wherein both these kinds of righteousness doe stand, as also what is the difference betweene them.

*Mat.* The righteousness of the Law, is the perfect fulfilling of the Law. For if wee did fully and perfectly fulfill whatsoever that commandeth, wee should by our works be iust before God; neither should wee neede any other righteousness. But, the Apostle in diuers places sheweth,

Rom. 3. 20.  
Gal. 3. 11.

sheweth, that this cannot be; forasmuch as all men bee sinners, and therefore vnrighteous (which shall not be omitted by vs, when we speake of workes :) and therefore he concludeth, that we are iustified by faith.

But the righteousness of faith is the righteousness of Iesus Christ; which, by faith is freely imputed vnto vs of God. By these things thou maist vnderstand, what the difference is betwixt the righteousness of the Law, and the righteousness of faith.

1 The Law requireth it of our selues: but faith calleth vs from our selues, to seeke for it in Christ: in whom only it is, and that indeed perfectly.

2 Againe, the Law requireth vs to obserue and doe all that it commandeth: otherwise it threatneth the curse. But faith requireth this one thing, namely, that we beleue; and promisseth all kind of blessings to such as beleue.

3 Finally, the righteousness of the Law, comming from our selues, would set vp merit, and put away grace: Contrariwise, the righteousness of Faith, which is from God, taketh away merit, and setteth vp grace.

*Theoph.* Now I vnderstand, wherein both these righteousnesses consist, and in what things the one differeth from the other. But I thinke it may be gathered of your words, that we are not properly iustified by faith, but by the merit of Christ.

*Mat.* Thou gatherest rightly. For, if faith should iustifie by any inward vertue it hath, seeing that our faith is alwaies weake and imperfect, our righteousness would bee imperfect. Faith therefore is as it were an instrument wherewith we take hold vpon our perfect righteousness, which is in Christ, which *Paul* plainly expresth in these words; Al haue sinned, and are deprived of the glory of God: but are iustified freely, that is to say, by his grace, by the redemption made in Iesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to bee a reconciliation, through faith in his blood.

Rom. 3. 23.  
24. 25.

First, the Apostle witnesseth, that all men be vnrighteous; forasmuch as all men haue sinned, and therefore bee deprived of the fauour of God.

2 Then he teacheth vs, that the righteousness, by the which we are iustified before God, hath the foundation in the

the onely merite of Christs death wherewith God is pacified; so as he becommeth mercifull and fauourable vnto vs.

3 To conclude, he sheweth, that freely by faith we are made partakers of that righteousness of Christ. How often soeuer therefore this manner of speech is vsed by the Apostle, *we are iustified by faith*, he vnderstandeth, that this is done by the most perfect righteousness, obedience, and satisfaction of Iesus Christ: which gifts are then imputed to vs, when we are by faith made one with him.

*Theoph.* It followeth then, that all our righteousness is onely in imputation?

*Mat.* Yea truly. For it is necessary, to the end we may be accounted righteous before God, that our vnrighteousnesse be not imputed vnto vs, and that Christs righteousness be imputed. Now Christ performeth all these. The imputation of whose gifts causeth that our sinnes be not laide to our charge, forasmuch as by the benefit of that imputation they be couered, and remooued out of the sight of God; although he know euery one of them, so as he can tell their very number. Concerning these things, therefore, the case standeth, as it doth with the blacknesse of a coale, set on fire: which blacknesse we know to be in the coale, although we see it not with our eyes.

*Theoph.* These things call to my remembrance that excellent saying of *Dauid*, Blessed are they whose iniquities be forgiven, and whose sinnes be couered. Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord imputeth not sinne: but seeing our righteousness, and all our saluation dependeth vpon faith, tell me what faith is.

*Mat.* Faith in Christ, is a certaine speciall assurance; by the which we know that we are made partakers of the merit of the death and resurrection of Christ: so, as that it becommeth satisfaction for vs, and forgiveness of all our sinnes: \* which indeed is the foundation of the Christian Faith. Whereupon it is that they be indifferently vsed. For sometime the Scripture saith, that we are iustified by Faith in Christ, and sometime it ascribeth it simply to Faith.

*Galat. 2. 16*

*Iob 6. 47.*

\* See pag. 24.

*Rom. 3. 25. 26.*

*Ephes. 2. 8.*

*Theoph.* What then is Faith?

*Mat.* The word Faith hath many significations. For Of Faith, sometimes it is as much, as a promise to performe somewhat

what: thereupon, to keepe faith, is the same with standing  
 1 to a mans promise. Hereunto may be referred the saying  
 of *Paul*, God is faithfull; as if he had said, that God (which  
 2 men doe often) neuer faileth of his promise. Sometimes  
 also it is taken for the gift to worke myracles: as, when  
 1. Cor. 13. 3. *Paul* saith, that if he had all faith, so as hee could remoue  
 mountaines, yet if he had not loue, he were nothing. Be-  
 3 sides, it signifieth the holosome doctrine of godlynes. As,  
 Tit. 1. 13. when *Paul* charged *Titus*; Rebuke them that they may be  
 sound in the faith. In which sence, he is commonly said, to  
 be in a wrong faith. which erreth from the purity of doc-  
 4 trine. But, the most proper signification of the word *Faith*,  
 Gal. 2. 16. is that whereof wee speake in this place, and whereof there  
 Ephes. 2. 18. is so often mention in the Scriptures, when in many places  
 Heb. 11. 6. we are said to be iustified and saued by faith; and, that with-  
 out faith no man can please God. To conclude then, faith  
 is to vs a Certificate, that wee are beloued of God.

\* See page  
 24. \*

*Theoph.* \* But why saidst thou, at the beginning, that faith  
 in Christ is the foundation of faith it selfe?

*Mat.* Because wee cannot certainly determine, that  
 God will be mercifull to vs, except wee doe first know that  
 Christ by his death hath made satisfaction to God for our  
 1. pet. 2. 21. sinnes and reconciled him vnto vs. Therefore *Peter* saith,  
 that through Christ wee beleeue in God, which raised him  
 from the dead, and gaue him glory; that our faith and hope  
 might be in God. From whence it is easie to gather, that  
 Christ is the onely foundation of our faith, which the holy  
 Ghost hath ingrauen in our hearts.

And this is, as it were, the summe of the Christian faith,  
 which commonly is called the Apostles Creede, *Beleeue*  
*in God the Father Almighty, &c.*

### *The exposition of the Apostles Creed.*

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore speake of this confession of the  
 faith: which I desire thee to expound to me full and whole.  
 But before I come to the parts of it, I will propound three  
 things, wherein I desire to be satisfied of thee.

1 First, why it is called the Apostles Creed.

2 Secondly, seeing the doctrine, which is contain-  
 ed in it, generally belongeth to all the faithfull, why  
 wee

we say; I beleue in God, not, We beleue in God?

3. Thirdly, what properly it is to beleue in God?

*Mat.* The word (*Symbolum*) which in English sometime wee translate *Creede*: in this place signifieth as it were, the gathering together of many parts into one, Which tearme doth not vnfitly agree to this confession of the faith which we see, is made of many Articles.

Now it is called the Apostles Creede, because it containeth, as it were, a brieft summe of al the Apostolical doctrine, written in the books of the old and new Testament.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other point, whereof I doubted. Why do we say rather, I beleue in God, than We beleue? seeing this doctrine is generall, and all Christians are bound to beleue it?

*Mat.* That is for two causes. 1. First, because euery man can giue testimony of his owne faith: but of another mans faith he cannot.

2. Secondly, that we might vnderstand, that these articles, were not written so much to teach vs, as that by them wee might be built vp to saluation. For otherwise, they should profit vs no more, than if a sicke man saw a medicine, hauing vertue to driue away a malady, the working whereof he knew: and yet did neglect to take it.

But, we professe that applying of it to our selues, when euery of vs faith, I beleue?

*Theoph.* As far as I perceiue, there is no little likenesse betweene the sicknesse of the body, and the sicknesse of the mind: and againe, betweene the meanes of attaining the health of the one and of the other.

*Mat.* Nay rather, there is very great likenesse: For, as in the sicknesse of the body, there bee three degrees to the obtaining of health, that is to say, the

1. Knowledge of the sicknesse.
2. The knowledge of the remedy.
3. And the applying of it.

So also it fareth with our spirituall sicknesse, sinne. For whosoeuer hath acknowledged that sicknesse, hath attained the first degree of health. If hee know the remedy, which is Christ, he is in the second. But all this is to no purpose, except the remedy be applied by faith.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore come to the third. What is it properly to belecue in God?

*Mat.* When we speake of God, we say we belecue three manner of waies.

To beleue  
what it is.

1. First, to beleue one God.

2. Secondly, to beleue God.

3. Thirdly, to beleue in God.

Whereof the two first are the degrees, by which at length we come to the third.

To beleue one God, is as much to say, thou beleuest that there is one God.

To beleue God, is to beleue that God is true concerning his promises declared in his Word.

To beleue in God, is according to those promises, to put thy whole trust and hope in God: and this belongeth to the faithfull onely, who by true faith, apply those promises to themselves.

Whoe In-  
fideis.

*Theoph.* Thou dost then account them infidels that stand still in the first or second degree?

*Mat.* I doe indeed. For they beleue no more than the diuers themselves doe.

*Theoph.* Thou hast satisfied me. We are therefore to come to the parts of the Creed.

*Mat.* They are foure.

The parts of  
the Creed.

1. Of Faith in God the Father.

2. Of Faith in his Sonne, Iesus Christ.

3. Of Faith in the holy Ghost.

4. Concerning the Church.

*Theoph.* But why is our Faith distinctly referred to euery person by it selfe? seeing that it is one God, in whome we beleue?

Why our  
faith is refer-  
red to each  
person by it  
selfe.

*Mat.* That our Faith may be the better strengthened: which is then done, when we consider distinctly and a part, as each person according to his distinct property hath wrought in our saluation. Notwithstanding, our Faith is neuer a whit the lesse referred to one God.

*Theoph.* How?

*Mat.* For it is all one, as if a man should say, I put all my hope and trust in one God, of whose loue I cannot doubt at all. For, whereas he is distinguished into three persons,  
euery



every one of them confirmeth in me the assurance of that loue. For the father hath both created mee by his omnipotency, and also doth guide mee by his mercifull providence. The Son hath redeemed me by his death, reconciled me to God the Father, and euen yet maketh intercession to him for me. The holy Ghost, by his diuine power, hath sanctified mee, and ioined me with Christ and his Church; that with it I might be made partaker of all his gifts, vntill he bring me euen to eternall life.

*The first part of the Apostles Creed: which is of Faith in God the Father.*

*Theoph.* In this exposition of the Creed, which thou hast euen now made, there be some few things whereof I will aske thee. I will keepe the order of the parts in propounding my questions.

I will therefore begin with God the Father: by whose gracious providence thou saidst that wee are ruled. First I demand therefore, whether the Father onely created vs? Whether the Father onely created vs.

Secondly, why thou makest here mention of his mercifull providence; whereof there is no one word in the Creed. Now answer me to the first.

*Mat.* Those three persons (forasmuch as they haue all one essence, namely the Godhead, and therefore are one God) doe nothing apart or a sunder one from the other. Therefore, both in our creation, redemption, and sanctification, every one of the persons wrought according to their distinct proprietie.

*Theoph.* In these three diuine workes; shew mee this distinctly.

*Mat.* Concerning the creation, the Scripture doth teach vs, that the Father made all things by his word; that is to say, by his Sonne, and by his Spirit. Concerning our redemption, the Father, saith Christ, so loued the world, that he gaue his onely begotten Sonne to death for our redemption: which death the Sonne suffered by the power of the holy Ghost. The same also is to be vnderstood of our sanctification: whereof the Father is as it were the originall fountaine. For, Christ praying for the faithfull, saith; Father, sanctifie them. The matter of our sanctification is Psal. 134.  
Ioh. 3. 6.  
Heb. 9. 14.  
Ioh. 17. 17.

in the Sonne. For he addeth, I sanctifie my selfe, that they also may be sanctified. And the holy Ghost is, as it were a conduite, through the which that holiness floweth from Christ, who is the head, into vs that are his members.

Why the  
Scripture as-  
cribeth crea-  
tion to the fa-  
ther, redemp-  
tion to the  
Sonne, sancti-  
fication to the  
holy Ghost,  
Gen. I.

*Theoph.* How commeth it to passe then, that the Scripture ascribeth Creation to the Father, Redemption to the Sonne, and Sanctification to the holy Ghost?

*Mat.* It is in respect of our rudenesse: because the worke of the Father is more manifest and euident in the creation, the worke of the Sonne in the redemption, and the worke of the holy Ghost in the sanctification: For, in the creation the Scripture setteth the Father before vs, as some mightie King commanding.

Philip. 2. 17.

In the redemption, it setteth forth the Sonne: who manifested himselfe vnto men, in the flesh; wherein he suffered death for vs.

Tit 3. 6.  
1. Cor. 6. 19.  
Acts 4. 24.  
m. 7. 25.  
1 Cor. 12. 3.

In the sanctification, it setteth forth the holy Ghost: who putteth forth his diuine vertue and force, whereby he dwelleth in vs. Hence it is, that the Father is called CREATOR, the Sonne OUR LORD, that is to say, redeemer, and the Spirit HOLY; to the end wee may vnderstand, that we are sanctified of it.

How Lord  
signifieth re-  
deemer.

*Theoph.* Wherefore saiest thou, that, when the Sonne is called our Lord, it is all one as if a man did call him Redeemer?

*Mat.* Because he hath gotten this dominion, or Lordship by his redeeming of vs. For thereby he hath deliuered vs from the tyranny of the diuell, and subiected vs to his owne kingdome.

*Theoph.* I had thought, that the holy Ghost had beene therefore called holy, to note the holiness wherewith hee is indued.

Why the ho-  
ly Ghost is  
called holy.

*Mat.* Surely, in that sence, there is no more cause to call him holy, then the Father or the Sonne; who it is certaine, are also holy: But he is called holy, in respect of the holiness which he worketh in vs.

*Theoph.* Touching the first part, I require no more. I come therefore to the other. Wherefore makest thou mention of the gracious prouidence of God, whereof the confession of our faith maketh no mention?

Mat.

*Mat.* The prouidence of God is ioined to the creation of the prouidence of God with so neere a bond; that, of the one, the other doth necessarily follow. For it is altogether contrary to the nature of God to neglect all his creatures after hee hath once made them; especially when we speake of the elect, for whose saluation he deliuered his onely begotten sonne to death. Albeit therefore God do guide all things by his prouidence, as hath beene immediately afore declared of vs; yet after a special maner he looketh vpon the faithfull, to be at hand for the reliefe of their wants, & to deliuer them from dangers; whom whosoeuer toucheth, toucheth the apple of his own eye. Now, all these things are not darkly comprehended in the Article, which is concerning Faith in God the Father.

*Theoph.* Goe to therefore, goe on with euery particular.

*Mat.* When we call God Father, it is first no doubt in respect of Christ, who is the onely begotten Sonne. Notwithstanding from thence we gather, that he is a Father to vs, whom through him, he hath adopted and taken, for his children. Therefore the name of Father doth secretly containe in it the loue of God towards vs. But he is called omnipotent, not so much that we may vnderstand he is able to doe whatsoeuer hee will; as that we may know, he not onely willeth well to vs; but can also doe what hee willeth; so as nothing at all can let him from beeing assistant to vs.

Finally, he is said to be the maker of Heauen and earth; not onely to teach vs, that all things in Heauen and earth were made by him: but also to make it appeare vnto vs, that he hath all things in his power, that they may be aiding to vs, if neede be; and that he doth so bridle the diuell, and all our enemies, that they cannot hurt vs. Therefore the faithfull doe not in vaine put their trust in God; but with David may say, The Lord is with me, I will not feare; what man can doe to me.

Although I should walke in the vale of the shadow of death, I will feare no ill, because thou art with me.

*Theoph.* But oftentimes it falleth out, that the faithfull are most cruelly handled by their enemies.

*Mat.* That neuer commeth to passe, vnlesse God will it: without whome; not one haire can bee plucked from vs.

Whereby it is, that he who loueth vs, (for he is our Father, and is omnipotent) doth not suffer them to do it, but for our great good.

*Theoph.* Were it not more fit, if we said (according to the common receiued opinion) that this commeth to passe onely by Gods sufferance, and not by his will?

*Mat.* No man can separate the sufferance of God from his will, but he doth manifest iniurie to God, and taketh from vs a great part of our comfort.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because thereby God should be made idle, and al occasion of putting our trust in him should be taken away. And indeed, the state of the faithfull were most miserable, if they lay open to the assaults of raging Satan, and to the bloody lust of the vngodly. But the holy Scriptures teach vs far otherwise; that the diuell could doe nothing to I O B, before he had obtained leaue of God: also that he could not enter into the swine, but when Christ bad him: and that the wicked be in the hand of the Lord; that S E N A C H E R I B, the enemy of Gods people, was the rod of Gods wrath, and the staffe of his hand.

*Theoph.* But how can it be, that euill should be committed by the will and appointment of God, and yet he allow it not? Is not this altogether vnworthy of God? Moreouer, if that were true, the wicked were not to be blamed, seeing that when they doe euill, they execute the will of God.

*Mat.* Although euill cannot be committed, without the will and appointment of God: yet he neither willeth nor alloweth it, so far forth as it is euill, but rather abhorreth it, as clean contrary to his nature: But the good which by his maruellous wisdom he bringeth out of those euils, he both willeth and alloweth. Which may be seene in the very death of Christ: whome P E T E R affirmeth to haue bene deliuered by the determinate counsell and foreknowledge of God; (out of the which hee brought the saluation of the world) although he neither allowed the treason of I V D A S, nor the wicked enuie of the Iewes.

From hence it is, that albeit the wicked doe the will of God, yet are they no whit the lesse guilty before him. For they haue no purpose to doe it,

*Theoph.*

*Iob 1.12.*

*Math. 8.31*

*psal. 17.14*

*May 20.5*

*Psal. 5.5.*

*Acts 2.23.1*

*Theoph.* Therefore, vnlesse I bee deceiued, the wicked do not the will of God: but God doth his will by the wicked.

*Mat.* Thou iudgest rightly. For the purpose of the wicked, in doing the will of God, is farre vnlike the purpose of God himselfe. Which ISAIAH himselfe doth plainly note, *Isay. 10. 33* speaking of SENNACHERIB. For, after he had affirmed, that he was the rod of Gods wrath, & the staffe of his hand, whom he sent to a dissembling nation, whom also he would command to rob, and make the spoyle of the people whom the Lord was angry with, straight way hee addeth, But he thinketh not so, neither will his heart esteeme it so. For he imagineth to root out, and to cut off not a few nations.

*Theoph.* God therefore is a maruellous workman, who can vse an instrument to the performing of his worke.

*Mat.* Yea indeed: hee vseth both good and euill, to his glory; but in far vnlike respects. For, he guideth the affections of the former, namely of the Angels and of the faithfull, by his holy spirit: so as the worke, which he doth by them, is altogether good. But the other, that is to say the diuell and the wicked, are egged forward by their owne malice, and so they doe altogether varie from God; who neuertheless, by his wonderfull wisdom, doth so gouern their actions, that in the end they fall out to his glory.

*Theoph.* This doctrine agreeth excellently with that which I haue heard of thee more then once, namely, that the finnes of the wicked be from themselves: but, while as sinning they doe this or that thing, that is of God.

*Mat.* Thou gatherest well. For, so doth God exercise his iudgements. For, he punisheth sin with another sinne, and, for the most part, with a sinne of the same kinde: as murder with murder, theft with theft, according to the vnchangeable sentence pronounced by himselfe; Whoso-  
*Gen. 9. 6*  
euer sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed  
*Isay. 33. 4*  
Woe to thee that spoilest: when thou hast made an end of spoiling, thou shalt be spoiled.

*Theoph.* But often times it falleth out that the wicked prosper, so as they be free from all aduersitie, yea from deserved punishments; and the godly euery where be pressed downe with afflictions.

*Mat.* God punisheth some sins in this world; that both

his providence and iustice may appeare: for else he might seeme not to care what men did. And againe, hee leaueth many things unpunished; that we may vnderstand, there is another life after this, wherein he will most seuerely reuenge all the sinnes of men, yea, with the grieuousnesse of their punishment, equall the long patience wherewith hee endured them, and whereby through innumerable benefits he allured them to repentance.

But concerning the afflictions of the godly, when God sendeth them, he hath regard both to his owne glory, and to our saluation. For according to the saying of the Apostle, All things worke together for the best, to them that loue God. I omit, that it may be there are many hypocrits among the faithfull, whose sins God doth worthily punish.

*Theoph.* But, what profit may the faithfull reape by their afflictions?

*Rom. 8. 28.*  
The profit  
gotten by af-  
flictions.

*Mat.* What profit? Not one kinde, but many: which, for the help of memorie, I will bring into sixe heads or chiefe points.

*Theoph.* Declare the first.

*I. Humilitie.*

*Mat.* By them, God bringeth vs to humilitie: while, by our owne experience, he proueth, that whatsoeuer goodly matter we wondred at in our selues, is nothing. From hence was that speech of DAVID; With rebukes thou chastisest man for iniquitie, and makest his beauty to consume as a moth: surely euery man is vanitie.

*Psal. 39. II.*

*Theoph.* What is the cause that God doth so humble vs?

*Mat.* 1 First, that all glory and praise may bee giuen vnto him alone.

2 Secondly, that wee may put away that vaine confidence, which naturally sticketh within vs; and so flie to him alone, and put our trust in him.

*I. Pet. 5. 5.*

3 Last of all, that we may be the better prepar'd to receiue his gifts: which he giueth not but to the humble.

*Theoph.* Come now to the second head.

*2. Repentanc.*

*Mat.* By afflictions, God calleth vs to true repentance. For when he correcteth our sins, he doth it to make vs vnderstand, how much he detesteth sin; (wherein we do not a litle flatter our selues) that so as we might detest it.

And withall he rameth the rebellion of our flesh, (as hus-  
bandmen



bandman are wont to tame their vnbroken or stubborne cattell, with the plough) and daily more & more teacheth vs obedience. Fro hence it is that DAVID saith; it is good psal. 119. 71. for me that I was afflicted, that I may learne thy statutes.

*Theoph.* This bringeth that to my remembrance, which before this time I haue heard of thee; namely, that God by afflictions doth correct our vices, that he may allure vs vnto vertue.

*Mat.* Thou saiest well. For euen as yron, if it be not occupied, is eaten with rust; and the earth, vnlesse it be tilled bringeth forth nothing but briars and brambles: So also the godly, if they be not exercised with diuers afflictions, doe as it were fall asleepe in their pleasures, and become dull and slow to Gods seruice; so as in steed of fruits be- seeming repentance, they bring forth nothing but vanity and folly. Therefore the Apostle saith to the Hebrewes; Euery affliction for the present time seemeth not ioyous, Heb. 12. 10. but grieuous but, afterwards, it yeeldeth the quiet fruit of righteousnesse, to them that are thereby exercised.

*Theoph.* It is now time we proceed to the third head.

*Mat.* By afflictions God worketh this in vs that wee learne to pittie such as are in distresse. For no man hath 3. Pittying o  
othe compassion, or suffereth with another, who himselfe hath not suffered before. By this argument, the Apostle to the Hebrewes prooueth, that Christ will haue compassion vpon our afflictions, and that he will be our aduocate with his Father. These be his words; We haue not a high Priest Heb. 4. 14. which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but such a one, as was in all things tempted in the like sort; yet without sinne.

*Theoph.* Goe forward: declare vnto me the fourth head

*Mat.* By afflictions, the Lord shaketh off our drouinesse, and doth stirre vs vp to earnest prayer: Insomuch as not 4. Prayer without good cause, afflictions bee called the schoole of the holy Ghost, where we are taught to pray aright. The Lord also commandeth vs to pray in the time of trouble; psal. 50. 15. and promiset that we shall be heard. Call vpon me in the time of thy trouble, and I will deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. Which all the faithfull doe often proue true in their owne experience. For as the same Prophet saith;

7. *Gal. 3. 19.*

The Lord is neere those that be broken in heart, and will saue the contrite in spirit.

*Theoph.* This is a most excellent vse of afflictions. Now declare the fift.

5. *Triall of our faith.*

3. *Pet. I. 5.*

*Mat.* By them the Lord maketh our faith euident, that we may be assured of it, and strengthened in it. For, *PETER* saith; that, it is tried no otherwise, then gold is tried in a fornae of fire: which is a most fit similitude, for as fire is to the baser things; which either consumeth them (as, wood and straw) or else hardeneth them (as it doth clay;) but pretious things, (such as be gold and siluer) it melteth and clenseth: so there be diuers effects of afflictions according to the varietie of the persons to whom they be sent. For, they doe either consume the wicked through impatience, or else they harden them through despaire.

1. On the other side, they soften the hearts of the godly, to make them call vpon God.

2. They clenſe their hearts: forasmuch as by afflictions, our concupiscence is mortified.

3. Finally, they try our faith. For, while the Lord doth temper the bitterneſſe of them with his loue and gentlenes, hee cauſeth vs to take them patiently, and to faſhion our ſelues to his moſt holy wil: and, by this meanes: our faith is manifeſted. Hereupō *JAMES* calleth afflictions, by the name of temptation or triall; Blessed is the man, which endureth temptation. For when he hath bene tried, he ſhall receiue the crowne of life. Whereunto alſo that is to be referred, which is ſpoken of *PAUL*; that afflictions bringeth forth patience, patience experience, and experience hope. For, this the Apoſtle meaneth; that God, by the comfort which he bringeth vs in afflictions, proueth to vs by experience the truth of his promiſes: where through, from thenceforth we are confirmed in the hope of eternall life.

1. *Jam. 1. 12.*

Rom. 5. 3.

*Theoph.* Indee, the former foure vſes of afflictions are moſt excellent; and this fiſt is nothing inferiour: haſten therefore vnto the laſt.

6. *The renouncing of the world, & deſire of eternall life.*

*Mat.* By afflictions, God will call our minds away from theſe earthly things; that we may earneſtly deſire the life to come. For, the *Iſraelites*, if they had not bene ill intreated both in *Ægypt* and in the wildeſſe, would neuer haue

haue thoroughly thought vpon going to the land of Canaan; which was a figure of the heavenly inheritance. Therefore God doth as a caretull nurse; who, when shee should weane the childe; laieth some bitter thing vpon the teate, to cause the childe to hate and abhorre it.

Thou hast now shewed how many waies afflictions be necessary for vs. Thou seest therefore that we are not without cause warned by the Apostle, to beare them patiently, as sent from God our Father; when he saith; My sonne, <sup>Heb. 12. 5. 6.</sup> despise not the chastening of the Lord: neither faint when <sup>7. 8.</sup> thou art corrected of him. For, whom the Lord loneth he chastiseth, and scourgeth euery sonne whom he receiueth. If ye endure chastening, God offereth himselfe to you as to sonnes. (For what sonne is there whom the Father chasteneth not?) But if yee bee without chastening, whereof they be all partakers, verily ye are bastards, and not sons. Afterward he addeth, Wee had the Fathers of our bodies chastisers of vs, and we did them reuerence: should we not much more be in subiectiō to the Father of spirits that we may liue? For they indeed, for a few daies chastised vs, after their owne pleasure, but he, for our profit; that wee might be partakers of his holinesse.

*Theoph.* There is no cause, then, why the faithfull should in this world looke for prosperitie onely.

*Mat.* True: vnlesse they will deceiue themselves, For otherwise, it were necessary, that

- 1 The diuell should be without enuy,
- 2 The world without malice,
- 3 And wee our selues without sinne.

For the godly to be without afflictions it is impossible.

But, the diuell will alwaies burne in enuy against the faithfull; the world, with malice and mad hatred; and our sinnes will minister sufficient matter to God (who, neuertheles, euen therein hath care of our saluation) to giue the raines to those our enemies, to molest and trouble vs. Wherefore (according to the saying of the Apostle) let all such as desire to liue godly in Christ Iesus, make account that they shall suffer persecutions, Adde hereunto, that prosperity is not alwayes profitable for vs; nay, oftentimes it hurteth vs.

1. Tim. 3. 12

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.*

**Hart growing of prosperity** *Mat.* Because many times it hindereth our saluation, For it bringeth forth fruits altogether contrary to those which we reckoned vp euen now.

**Pride.**

1 For, it maketh vs proud and insolent; and keepeth vs from the knowledge of our sinnes.

2 It stirreth vs vp to serue our owne wicked lusts: and it is to them as nourishment or feuell, wherewith they are more and more set on fire.

3 It maketh vs negligent in praier; and, as it were, quencheth in vs the desire to pray.

4 It prouoketh vs to impatience, and wrath; and maketh vs voyde of the affections of mercy.

**Act. 14. 22.**

5 Finally, it maketh vs drunken with the loue of our selues, and of the world; and draweth vs away from meditation on the heauenly life. Therefore, not without cause, the Scripture testifieth, that through many afflictions wee must enter into the kingdome of God. And these are, in many places of the Bible, called strikings; to the end we might vnderstand them to be, as it were, certaine spirituall medicines, which are diuersly ministred to diuers persons, (by God himselte, the best spirituall Physitian) according to the quallitie of our sicknesse, & necessity. Notwithstand-

**2. Cor. 10. 13.**

ding, he dealeth alwaies, so gentle with vs, that he suffereth vs not to be tempted aboue that we are able to beare. For, while he chastiseth vs with the one hand, he lifeth vs vp with the other, and causeth the issue of the affliction to be alwayes happy: & thus he maketh prooffe to vs, of his bounty, and kindnesse in aduersitie, as well as in prosperitie. For, sometimes he tempereth them both together, or else sendeth them by turnes; lest wee should be too much either puffed vp with prosperitie, or throwne downe with aduersity. Hereupon, the Prophet saith; Weeping may abide in the euening; but ioye commeth in the morning. Yea, rather he vseth this variety and change, that wee may so much the more acknowledge what the sweetnesse of prosperitie is, & be therefore more earnestly bent to yeeld him thanks. For, as it is in the prouerbe, **HEE IS VNVVORTHY OF THE SVVEET THAT NEVER TASTED THE SOVRE.**

**Psal. 30. 5.**

*Theoph.* Hitherto thou hast declared certaine very excellent chiefe points concerning afflictions: which if they be

be earnestly fixed in our mindes, they will bring no small comfort, nor a little sturre vs vp to patience. Now these, vnlesse I be deceiued, are

1 First, that afflictions come not to vs, but by the will of God. Six speciall points, for consolation in aduersity

2 That they be sent to vs from God, to our good.

3 That God will assist vs to the patient bearing of them.

4 That God promisseth vs a blessed issue, yea at length a full deliuerance.

5 Finally, that, by meanes of them, prosperity is made, after a sort, more pleasant and delectable.

6 *Mat.* Thou passest ouer the chiefe point; namely, that fatherly loue of God which hee putteth in practise euen then when he doth chasten vs. For hee alwaies dealeth mercifull and graciously with vs, in the very afflictions. Which thing *DAVID* witnesseth in these words, The Lord is mercifull and gentle, slow to wrath, and abundant in kindnesse. He is not wont to chide alwaies, neither will he keepe his wrath for euermore. He hath not dealt with vs according to our sinnes: neither hath hee rewarded vs, according to our iniquities. For according to the height of the heauens aboue the earth, so exceeding is his kindnesse towards them that feare him. As farre as the East is from the West, so farre hath he remoued our sins from vs. As a father hath compassion on his children: so hath the Lord compassion on them that feare him. For, hee knoweth whereof we be made: he remembreth that we are but dust. Psa. 103. 8, 9. &c.

*Theoph.* Why callest thou this the chiefe point?

*Mat.* Because, vnlesse we fixe our eyes vpon that loue of God in our afflictions, all other comfort will be to no purpose. Contrariwise, if this go before, and they (which thou ere while recitedst) doe follow, either I am greatly deceiued, or there is no affliction so hard which a faithfull man may not be able to ouercome; especially if it be to bee suffered for the testimony of the Gospell.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* There may fīue causes be alleadged, beside those which thou hast heard already.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* My heart longeth to heare them.

*Mat.* The first is this; that, by afflictions for righteousness sake, the Lord vouchsafeth vs the honour to be Martyrs, that is to say, witnesses of his truth. And so hee turneth the punishment ioyned with shame, which wee haue deserued, into most glorious afflictions. Whereupon, *Peter* speaking of them, said, that, it is better, if so the will of God be, that doing well wee should bee punished, then doing euill.

1. Pet. 3. 17.

2 The other is, that by them wee are made like, not onely to the holy Patriarkes, Prophets, Apostles; and other Martyrs, which liued before our times: but also to Christ himselfe, who hath set himselfe before vs, as a patterne of them, to be imitated; with whom (saith the Apostle) wee shall not otherwise be glorified, except we suffer with him.

Rom. 8. 17.

2. Tim. 2. 12.

3 The third is, because the glory of God, which ought to be far dearer to vs then our owne life, is this way not a little furthered. For, it oftentimes cometh to passe, that the very enemies of the Christian truth bee called to the knowledge of Christ, and the weake confirmed in it by our constancie and open confession of Gods name. Therefore it was well said of one of the ancient Fathers, that the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church.

Terul. in  
col. aduers.  
gnt.

1. Pet. 4. 14.

2. Cor. 1. 5.

4 The fourth is, that while wee be made partakers of Christs sufferings, the spirit of God resteth vpon vs, where with wee are maruellously comforted. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in vs: so our comfort aboundeth, through Christ.

Mat. 5. 12.

Luk. 6. 23.

2. Cor. 4. 17.

5 The fift is, because our reward is great in heauen, as Christ himselfe witnesseth. Yea, rather he willeth vs to reioyce, and to leape for ioy, in the midst of afflictions. *Paul* also saith the same, in these words; The momentary lightnesse of our affliction procureth vs a farre more excellent and an eternall weight of glorie: while wee looke not on things which are seen, but on things which are not scene. For, the things which are scene, are temporall; but the things which are not scene, are eternall. Therefore we haue no occasion of heauinesse giuen vs, by suffering in this sort: nay rather we ought to take matter of exceeding comfort



comfort and ioy, as of the greatest good which is wont to be giuen of God, and as of a speciall gift which he giueth not but to his elect and most dearly beloued children. For PAUL teacheth; that it is giuen vs not onely to beleue in Christ, but also to suffer for him. In another place also the same Apostle saith of himselfe, God forbid that I should boast in any thing, saue in the Crosse of our Lord Iesus Christ: whereby the world is crucified to me; and I to the world.

Phil. 1. 29.

Gal. 6. 14.

*The second part of the Apostles Creede: which is, of Faith in Christ.*

*Theoph.* We haue spoken largely enough of the first part of the Creed: the matter whereof requireth that wee come to the Second, which is concerning the Sonne, of whome thou saidst we were redeemed, and that he did continually make intercession for vs.

I doe therefore demand of thee, in which Articles that redemption and intercession is conteined?

*Mat.* Indeed redemption hath chiefly the foundation in the article of the death and passion of Christ, which is as it were the price of our redemption: For by it, ioining there-to the resurrection, wee were deliuered from the Tyranny of the diuell, and brought into the liberty of Gods children, which Christ himselfe witnesseth in these wordes; The Sonne of man is come into this world, to giue his life a price of redemption for many.

The foundation of our redemption.

Mat. 10. 28.

Concerning his intercession: it is ioined by PAUL with the Article of sitting at the right hand of God, as a part thereof. These be his words, What is hee that shall condemne? It is Christ which is dead, yea rather which is raised vp from the dead, who is also at the right hand of God & maketh intercession for vs. For because the sitting at the right hand of the Father, is referred to the dignitie, whereunto he is aduanced with the Father, by a similitude taken from Kings, which are wont to place those at their right hand, that be most welcome and acceptable to them, and whom they desire to haue most honoured; Therefore doth he ioine his intercession with it, to the end wee might know, that Christ bestoweth the great authoritie hee hath with

Rom. 8. 34.

Why there  
be in the  
Creed more  
Articles of  
Christ than  
these three.

with his Father in this, that by the benefit of his death, he might become mercifull vnto vs.

*Theoph.* Forasmuch as in these three articles of the death, resurrection, and the sitting of Christ at the right hand of the Father, the chiefe points of our saluation be conteined, why were the other articles put into the Creede, especially seeing it is a summe, and as it were an epitome or abridgement of the things, which are to be beleueed to our comfort and saluation.

*Mat.* It was, that our faith might be the better defended, against the temptation of the diuell and the flesh.

*Theoph.* I do desire to haue these things declared by thee more at large, and to bee instructed to what temptation each article of the faith is opposed or set against, that if at any time neede shall be, I may make vse of them.

The vse of  
the Articles, of  
the faith, a-  
gainst three  
sundry tempta-  
tions,  
Psal. 57. 7.  
Eph. 2. 3.  
Conceined by  
the holy  
Ghost,  
Matth. 1. 20

*Mat.* The things which haue bene spoken by me in the former Chapter, of the person and office of Christ, there is no cause in this place to repeat. This only I will shew, that each article is placed in most exquisite order, to the ende we might acknowledge in Christ, remedies against euery kinde of spirituall sicknesses, and against all the punishments which we haue deserued. As first of all, we indeed be conceined in sinne, by meanes whereof it is that we are the children of wrath. The remedies against this euill, is that which in the first place we beleue of Christ, namely, that he was conceined by the holy Ghost, that wee may know our conception to be sanctified in Christ, so as now euen from our first beginning, wee are by him consecrated to God the Father.

*Theoph.* Why was it necessary, that for these thinges Christ should be conceined by the holy Ghost?

*Mat.* Because the naturall order of humane generation is defiled and corrupted; so as it was altogether necessary that the holy Ghost should haue the worke in that conception, to purge and cleanse the substance of the Virgin, of whom hee was conceined; and that thus he might be pure and free from the blot of originall sinne, wherewith if hee had bene defiled, he himselfe should haue needed a redeemer and mediator, so farre should hee haue bene from redeeming vs, and from being able to reconcile vs to God  
the

the Father. Adde hereunto, that there can bee no ioyning of the God-head with that that is vnclane.

*Theoph.* wherefore, hauing mentioned this conception, is it by & by added, that he was borne of the Virgin MARY? Borne of the Virgin Mary. Mat. 1. 16.

*Mat.* It was to teach vs, that hee did not onely take our nature: as one which was made of a woman, as PAUL speaketh: but also, that we might know him to be the very Redeemer and Messias promised to the fathers. Forasmuch as he was borne of a Virgin descending from ADAM to DAVID, according to the Prophecies of the Prophets, and that in the time and place by them appointed.

Gal 4. 4.

*Theoph.* Why was it necessary that his mother should bee a Virgin?

*Mat.* That both his conception and natiuitie, the worke of God might the more plainely appeare, and that there might be nothing wherby to darken it neuer so litle.

*Theoph.* Declare the other Articles.

*Mat.* Because after our conception and birth, for the innumerable sins by vs daily committed, we had deserued to suffer euen in this life all manner of reproaches and contumelies, and besides, in time to come hereafter, most grievous torments both in soule and body, it is expressly mentioned, that Christ suffered all those things for vs, when it is said he suffered vnder PONTIUS PILATE: for vnder him, for vs, in our stead, he was bound, railed vpon, bearen, and crowned with thornes. Moreouer, we had deserued most cruell death, with reproach and shame: this also Christ suffered for vs. For hee was crucified betweene two theeues, which kind of death was accursed of God himselfe, for it was appointed for euill doers and wicked men. But by dying he ouercame death, so as death is now to vs, not deadly, but making aliue. Moreouer, the Iudge is named vnder whom he suffered, not so much to prooue the certainty of the story, as to teach vs that Christ, notwithstanding hee were most iust & innocent, was for vs condemned before an earthly Iudge, as a guiltie person, that by his most vniust condemnation, wee should haue full absolution and discharge before the iudgement seate of God.

Suffered vnder pontius pilate.

Crucified. Mat. 27. 35

Dead. Mat. 27. 50.

*Theoph.* I desire to haue that more largely declared by thee, which I heard euen now of the death of Iesus Christ; namely,

namely that by dying he ouercame death, so as it is not now deadly vnto vs, but a making aliuē.

How Christ  
brought death  
to death.

Hof. 13. 14

*Mat.* That thou maieſt vnderſtand theſe things rightly; it is to bee knowne, that death, when it would haue ſwallowed vp Chriſt, in whom is the Fountaine of life, was it ſelfe ſwallowed vp of him, ſo as he became deadly to death; according to the prophecie of HOSEA; O death I will be thy death. Seeing therefore by the death of Chriſt, death is ſwallowed vp in victory, now the faithfull are deliuered from the Tyranny of it. There is no cauſe then why we ſhould feare it, nay, rather let vs be bold to prouoke, and as it were challenge death with the Apoſtle, crying out, O death, where is thy victory?

1. Cor. 15. 54.

*Theoph.* But it doth ſtill dayly exerciſe his tyranny vpon the faithfull, for it killeth them.

Death deliue-  
reth the faith-  
full from in-  
numerable  
deaths.

*Mat.* Nay rather cleane contrariwiſe: For, while it ſeemeth to kill them, it deliuereth them from a thouſand deaths, that is to ſay, from the innumerable troubles of this world, to the end they may liue moſt bleſſedly in the heauens.

*Theoph.* Let vs go forward to the reſt.

*Mat.* We had deſerued that our bodies after death ſhould be thruſt into the graine, which is deaths priſon, and that our ſoules ſhould be caſt down into hell, to be tormented with euerlaſting paines.

Chriſt, that he might remedy both the euils, would haue his body buried, that ſo he might purſue death it ſelfe, being ready to die in his owne hold, that is to ſay, into the graine: whoſe nature therefore he changed, ſo as it is no more to vs the goale of death, but a place appointed for God, wherein our bodies are kept againſt the day of the glorious reſurrection.

Acts 7. 60.

1. Theſ. 4. 13.

For this cauſe the Scripture affirmeth, that the faithfull departed are not dead, but a ſleepe. Wherevpon it came to paſſe, that the Fathers of the primitive Church named thoſe places wherein the bodies of the faithfull were buried κοιμητήρια, that is to ſay, ſleeping places.

He deſcended  
into hell.

Moreouer Chriſt would tarry in the graine ſome daies that ſo it might certainly appeare, that he was dead indeed. But then he deſcended into hell for vs, when hee endured thoſe

those most extreame tormentes & sorrows, euen the wrath of God which we had deserued. Now those were the euermore lasting punishments, which we should haue suffered. Mat. 26. 38. G. I.

Vpon the feeling of these sorrowes, he sweat blood in the garden, & not for feare of bodily death: for otherwise hee should haue bene the most fearefull of all other men.

Moreouer, these sorrowes caused, that in the very agonie hee cried out; My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee? Yet not that God euer forsooke him, but because he was in our stead, and offered himselfe to his Father as a baile for vs; it was necessary that his diuinity should be hidden for a time, vntill the humanitie had suffered all the things, which both here and in the world to come wee had deserued. Howbeit the punishment which in respect of vs was eternall and endlesse, in Christ was made temporary, and hauing end: because hee himselfe is eternall and infinite, and therefore he put an end to those euermore lasting punishments whereunto we are accursed. Luk. 22. 44. Mat. 27. 46.

*Theoph.* But this article of Christs descending into hell, is placed in the Creede after his buriall: wherefore it seemeth, that it cannot be referred vnto those paines which he suffered before death: for the order it selfe is against it.

Moreouer, this selfe same thing seemeth to be contained in another article, euen in that, HE SUFFERED VNDER PONTIVS PILATE: in which words, not those paines onely are to be vnderstood which he suffered in his body, but those also which he suffered in his soule.

*Mat.* This article of Christs descending into Hel, cannot otherwise be expounded, but as it hath bene expounded of me, for if it be referred to his buriall, as some would haue it, bringing for the confirmation of their opinion those places of Scripture wherein the graue it selfe is called by the name of Hell, it shall be nothing else but a repetition of that which is farre more plainly set out in the former article, which indeede doth not agree to so short a summarie as the Creede is. Much lesse is this article to be vnderstood of Christs soule going downe into the place of the damned. For Christ said to the theefe, This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Moreouer, there was no such thing further required, forasmuch as all things were

D

finished

Iob 19. 39.

The order of  
the articles  
which respect  
Christ.

finished vpon the Crosse: for he saide a little before his death, It is finished. Concerning the order or method, it hath beene before declared by vs, that they which wrote this Creed, looked into this, that in each article they might set before vs the seuerall remedies, which bee ministred vnto vs by Christ: against all kindes of temptations and spirituall diseases. Therefore they would not onely expresse the paines which he suffered in his body, but also the fearefull torments which hee suffered in his soule, and which vnto vs are most terrible, for these we haue deserued to endure for euer in Hell it selfe: the temptations whereof, farre exceede that which ariseth of the afflictions of this life, yea, and bodily death. Wherefore hauing comprehended all these paines generally in this article, He suffered vnder PONTIVS PILATE; afterward they would handle them particularly. And first of all, those which he suffered in body, in these words; Hee was crucified, dead and buried: for they purposely ioined his buriall, that as it were in one row, they might comprehend all things, which appertaine to the abusing of his body. Which beeing declared, they added those horrible torments, which hee suffered in his soule, in these words; He descended into Hell. Which they did, to the end wee may vnderstand, that Christ when hee had suffered all the thinges, which wee should haue suffered in hell, did as much, as if by a locall descending, hee had descended into Hell it selfe; and that therefore we are free from it.

*Theoph.* Now do I very well allow the exposition of this article which you haue deliuered, as that which bringeth vs no small comfort Yea, I doe very well like the order of it selfe, for it is easier to apply the sufferings of Christ to our selues, when they are reckoned vp in that order, wherein we should haue suffered them, than in any other.

*Mat.* Thou iudget rightly: for the temptation of the second death, that is to say, of the punishments which abide for vs in hell, is wont to come into our minds after the temptation of the first death.

*Theoph.* Declare vnto me the other articles.

The third day  
he rose again.

*Mat.* The resurrection followeth, by the which Christ overcame death, hell, sinne, yea the diuell himselfe, and triumphing



triumphing ouer them, and leading them captiues, hee ascended into heauen, whither he is gone vp with the greatest glory, not so much for himselfe, as thereby to open a way for vs, and to take possession of it in our name; vntill our soules come to possesse it after death, and body and soule together after the resurrection. But because so long as wee here liue, euē after we are by faith made partakers of Christs gifts, wee fall into many sinnes, which are worke to trouble our consciences, and to weaken our faith, it is by and by added, that hee sitteth at the right hand of the Father, to the end we might know, and be assured of that intercession which hath before bene mentioned. And so we might vnderstand, that after he had once suffered death vpon the Crosse for our sinnes, hee doth continually offer the merit hereof vnto his Father for vs, and therefore causeth the Father himselfe to be fauourable vnto vs. Which thing PAVL sheweth in these words, Christ is at the right hand of the Father, and maketh request for vs.

Luk. 24. 39.  
Eph. 4. 8.  
He ascended  
into heauen,  
Acts 1. 9.

And sitteth at  
the right  
hand of God  
the Father  
Almighty.  
Col. 3. 1.

Rom. 8. 34

More, he vseth that great authority whereinto he is aduanced, to the gouernement & helpe of his Church against all the hurts that might come vpon it, and to the accomplishment of our saluation. Finally, Beecause (such is the weaknesse of our faith) some feare of condemnation in that last day may assaile our minds, wherein the Lord will render to euery one according to his workes: therefore that this temptation may bee met with, it is saide further, that Christ which is our intercessor, shal also be our Iudge. And this is the meaning of that article, wherein we beleue that he shall come to iudge quicke and dead, euē that wee might be without all feare of condemnation; and contrariwise, certainly know, that by the sentence of the Iudge himselfe, we shall obtaine saluation.

Mat. 16. 27

From thence  
he shall come  
to iudge quicke  
and dead.

*Theoph.* Who are those quicke and dead, who thou saist shall be iudged by Christ?

*Mar.* The quicke are they which at that day shall bee aliue, who as PAUL saith, shall bee changed in the twinkling of an eye: and the dead are they, whom death before shall haue taken out of the company of the liuing.

1. Cor. 15. 52

*Theoph.* But is it necessarie; that the dead should rise againe in that day; of whom iudgement was giuen before.

eccl. 9. 10

whether they be good or euill?

*Mat.* These things shall not let their appearing at that day; and that for two causes:

1. The first, because that first iudgement pertaineth onely to the soule: but the latter to the whole man.

2. The other is, that the particular iudgement may be proclaimed before all men, and so there may bee a more manifest declaration of God his righteousness. Therefore the Scripture affirmeth, that in that day both good and bad shall bee iudged by Christ according to their works: which without doubt shall bee brought to light, as it were manifest testimonies either of the faith, or the vnbeliefe, lying hid in the heart, although faith it selfe, or vnbeliefe in those that come to yeares, be speciall causes, either of the saluation or damnation of men, as it is declared by the Judge himselfe; He that beleueth in me, is not condemned: but he which beleueth not, is condemned alreadie, because he hath not beleued in the name of the onely begotten Sonne of God.

*Ioh. 3. 18. and 3. 24.*

Why Christs death is mentioned oftner in the Scriptures then the other things he did for vs.  
*Rom. 5. 10.  
Rom. 4. 25.  
1. Cor. 15. 14.*

*Theoph.* I do now at length acknowledge all the articles which appertaine to the faith of Christ, to be indeed profitable, yea, necessary to the establishment of our faith. I would notwithstanding know, why in the Scriptures his death onely is for the most part spoken of, as in that place of *PAUL*: We are reconciled by the death of his Sonne.

*Mat.* By such kind of speeches, the Scripture desirous of breuitie & shortnes, for the chiefe part nameth the whole. Nenerthelesse, sometimes his resurrection also is ioyned; because in it Christ ouercame death: whereupon it is, that the force of Christs death hangerh vpon his resurrection. For if Christ be not raised vp faith *PAUL*, our faith is vain. This also is to bee noted by the way, that the death of Christ is not seldome vnderstood by his blood, because that pouring out of his blood, amongst other things which he suffered for vs is very excellent and notable.

*Theoph.* Bring forth some testimonies for it.

*Mat.* They are to be found euery where in the holy writings. Peace being made by the blood of Christ, by him hee hath reconciled all things to himselfe, as well those that be in earth as those that be in heauen, that is to say,

*Col. 1. 20*

say, both those that be in the Church already receiued into heauen, as those that be yet in the militant Church below.

We were redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver or gold: but with the pretious blood, as of a Lambe without spot, and vndefiled, euen of Christ. We are iustified by the blood of Christ.

*The third part of the Apostles Creed: which is,  
of Faith in the holy Ghost.*

*Theoph.* Wee haue proceeded farre enough concerning faith in Christ. Now therefore we must come to the third part of the Creed, which is of the holy Ghost, wherunto thou diddest attribute, that it doth sanctifie vs, and ioine vs with Christ. But there be two things, which I will propound vnto thee to be declared.

1 First, wherein that sanctification standeth.

2 Secondly, in what sence thou saiest, that we are by the holy Ghost ioined with Christ, forasmuch as euen now thou ascribedst that vnto faith.

*Mat.* The sanctification which the holy Ghost worketh in vs, standeth heerein, that it amendeth the corruption planted in our minds, & repaireth the decay of our soules, otherwise cast away and vndone by originall sinne.

*Theoph.* Declare to me the effects of that repairing.

*Mat.* First of all, it lighteneth our mindes, so as we doe acknowledge the true God in Christ, and yeeld him the worship due to his maiestie.

Secondly, it reformateth our hearts, working faith in them which pietie or Godlines followeth, that is to say, the loue and feare of God, from whence also springeth repentance in selfe: for this faith which lieth hid in the heart, sheweth it selfe, as it were visible to the eies. But the sanctification, whereof we speake, is not seldome called by the name of regeneration.

*Theoph.* Why is it called also by this name?

*Mat.* Because, when the holy Ghost by his grace & vertue worketh in vs, stedfastly to beleue the things which in former times we condemned, and that truly repenting wee doe the things which be directly contrary to our former actions: wee doe in very deepe seeme to bee borne

Ephe. 4. 24  
2. Cor. 5. 17

What our re-  
generation or  
sanctification  
is.

Col. 3. 10

again, and to be made new men, as **PAVL** speaketh: And verily all the parts and qualities of our soule are so reformed, as they may seeme to be altogether changed.

*Theoph.* Therefore this sanctification or regeneration, is nothing else, but the repairing of the image of God, which was lost in **ADAM**.

*Mat.* Thou iudgeth rightly: and **PAVL** himselfe testifieth this, when hee saith, that wee haue put on the new man, which is renewed into the knowledge, agreeable to the image or likenesse of him that created him. But **Christ** is he, by whom that likenesse of God is brought from heauen vnto vs, and communicated by spirituall regeneration, euen as **ADAM** by carnall generation hath made vs partakers of sinne with him.

*Theoph.* Thou speakest of two generations, very much differing the one from the other, I meane the first which we haue from **ADAM**, from that which **Christ** worketh in vs by his Spirit.

*Mat.* Verily, by that first generation we are borne vnto sinne; but by this latter we are borne vnto righteousness.

By the first we are borne children of wrath; by the latter, children of God.

By the first we are borne vnto death; by the latter vnto euermlasting life. And for this cause **Christ** said to **NICODEMVS**. Except a man bee borne againe, hee cannot see the kingdome of God.

*Theoph.* Hitherto I haue heard what sanctification or regeneration is, namely that it consisteth in the vnderstanding of heavenly things concerning our saluation; and in the reformation of our heart and will, which causeth vs to beleeue in God through **Christ**, and to obey him. But how is it that the Apostle whom thou citest speaking of this repairing, maketh mention onely of the vnderstanding, and not of the will? For he saith, that wee haue put on the new man, which is renewed into knowledge agreeable to the image of him that created him.

*Mat.* In that place indeede there is onely mention of knowledge, but vnder the name of knowledge are vnderstood both holinesse of life and reformation. Which also, in another place, are by name spoken by the same Apostle,

Apostle, when he saith, that that new man is put on which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. Thou seest that in those places, one part is taken for both, because they are at once or together reformed by the holy Ghost; although in diuers manner, For to some hee giueth more knowledge than reformation. And contrariwise to some others, more zeale and reformation, than knowledge.

*Theoph.* But how is it, that there be many also found, vnto whom there is giuen more then common knowledge of God, and of his truth, whose life notwithstanding is most wicked?

*Mat.* Indeepe I grant this, that God sometimes giueth euen to the vnfaithfull some knowledge of his truth, which also for the most part is coloured with great words, & externall shew. But it is not the right knowledge of the true God, which is alwaies ioyned with his obedience. Neither indeede can any man know him, but hee as straightwaies beloued of him: but that loue cannot stand; except we doe obey his commandements. Therefore Iohn saith, By this we know that we know him, if wee keepe his commandements. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandements, is a lier, and the truth is not in him.

*Theoph.* But whether of those two is the better, either the knowledge of God, or the obedience of his commandements?

*Mat.* Indeepe knowledge is better than obedience in this, that it begetteth in vs both the loue and obedience of God, but especially for that by it wee are transformed, as the Apostle speaketh, from glory vnto glory, that is to say, as it were by certaine degrees, as that knowledge, getteth increase in vs. Neuerthelesse, that image or likeness of God, doth not so expressly shine in vs in knowledge, which for the most part lieth hid in the minde, as it doth in obedience, namely while we liue temperately, iustly, and godly: for those excellent vertues declare vs not to be bastards, but the true children of God.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because as we are thought their children according to the flesh, whose likeness we haue concerning the bo-

dic: so are we accounted his spirituall children, whose spirituall likenesse we shew in our workes.

*Theoph.* Thou callest the words of Christ to my remembrance, wherewith he reproveth the Scribes and Pharises, boasting themselves to bee the children of ABRAHAM. If you are ABRAHAMs children, you would doe the workes of ABRAHAM. You are of your father the deuil, & the lusts of your father will you fulfill.

*Mat.* Very truly. Hereunto also may bee referred that saying of Christ, which he addeth after that hee had exhorted vs to holynesse of life; THAT YOU MAY BE THE CHILDREN OF THAT YOUR FATHER VVHICH IS IN HEAVEN. But this holynesse and reformation of life are effects and fruits of repentance, whereof mention was made before by vs, when we spake of sanctification.

Of repentance.

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore now speake somewhat of repentance: and first what is repentance?

*Mat.* It is the hatred of sinne, and an earnest loue of righteousness, by the which we are continually stirred vp to abhorre our vices, and are moued to do good workes, not for feare of punishment, or hope of reward, but for that loue we beare towards God, which worketh in vs, that with a ioyfull heart we are moued to his obedience, and with griefe goe astray from his commandements. And therein is the promise fulfilled made vnto vs of God by his Prophets, namely that he will take from vs the stony heart, in stead whereof hee will giue vs an heart of flesh, wherein he will engraue his Law, that we may walke in his commandements. Hence it commeth, that the Law of God, which in former times was grieuous and hated of vs, is now not onely grieuous, but most acceptable and delightfull, euen as it is vwritten by the Prophets.

Ier. 31. 33.  
Eze. 36. 26.

Psalm 95. 14.  
7. 47.

*Theoph.* How many parts of repentance be there?

*Mat.* Two. Namely, 1. The mortification or killing of the old man, that is to say, of the corruption which by reason of sinne sticketh within vs. 2. And the resurrection of the new man.

The same also be the parts of regeneration: for it is necessarie that the holy Ghost doe first kill all euils; and euen corruption it selfe, before it plant good things in our hearts.



hearts. But that mortification hath it force from the death of Christ, of whom when we are made partakers by faith; he doth not onely blot all our sinnes, but also causeth that we acknowledge them, and being acknowledged, doe hate them. Which thing PAUL teacheth vs in these words: This wee knowe, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sinne might be weakned, that heereafter wee should not serue sinne.

Moreouer, the rising againe of the new man which borroweth his force and efficacie from the resurrection of Christ, worketh strength in vs, by meanes whereof from the heart wee apply our selues to the obedience of God; which also the same Apostle plainly teacheth, where he saith: We are buried together with Christ by baptisme into his death, that as Christ is raised vp from the dead, into the glorie of the Father, euen so should we walke in newnesse of life.

*Theoph.* Are then these two parts ioyned together by so strict a band, that the former can neuer be seuered from the latter?

*Mat.* They are indeede: for it is impossible that any man should be partaker of Christs death, but the same also is partaker of the fruit of his resurrection. The Apostle expressly affirmeth it; If wee be grafted with Christ to the similitude of his death, euen so shall we be to the similitude of his resurrection. For this cause so often as the Scripture speaketh of repentance, it doth not onely simply vnderstand some griefe conceiued for our sinnes, but reformation of life, and returning to a better course, which be witnesses of that sorrow lying hid in the heart. Therefore such as brag of repentance, and yet doe not returne, nor giue themselves to amendment of life, are liars, and doe mocke God himselfe.

*Theoph.* Thou saiest truely: for in our common life, he should be thought to mocke vs, that said he was sorrie hee had done vs wrong, and yet indeed continued in the thing it selfe. I doe rest satisfied in this doctrine of regeneration. But by it, that is not a little confirmed which was before proued by thee in the Chapter of MAN, namely, that man by his owne nature is the seruant of sinne, which neither vnderstandeth heavenly things that appertaine to his saluation.

nation, neither hath any freedome or power to doe that which is good. For seeing those faculties and powers are giuen vnto vs by the spirit of regeneration, it is without doubt that we lacke them, and therefore that we are altogether vnable our selues to beleue, or to doe well.

Of mans free  
will.

Mar. 11. 17.

Ioh. 6. 44.

Phil. 2. 13.

Ioh. 15. 4.

Ephes. 2. 1.

Ephes. 2. 5. 6

**Mar.** Thou gatherest well. But because this doctrine, concerning mans free-will, before this time, being as it is at this daie in controuersie, is not withstanding of great force to the establishment of the glory of God, and of our owne saluation, although it hath before beene declared by vs, yet I will not thinke much to speake of it againe, and to confirme it by testimonies of the Scripture. And first of all, concerning the true knowledge of God and of Iesus Christ, which is the foundation of our saluation: Christ himselfe saith; No man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither doth any man know the Father but the Son, & he to whom the Son will reueale him. No man can come to me except the Father that sent me draw him. But concerning the will, and that power whereby we doe obey God, **PAVL** saith. It is God which worketh in vs to will, and to performe it. Which also is confirmed of Christ himselfe by a most fit similitude, in these words; As the branch can beare no fruit of it selfe, except it abide in the vine, euen so neither can you, except you abide in me. He that abideth in me, and in whom I abide, the same bringeth much good fruit; for without me you can do nothing. Which things being so, what can man of himselfe beleue in the matter of religion, but error & lies? what is he able to do when the question is of worshipping God, but all maner vice & wickednesse? I will adde a place out of **PAVL** wherein all this doctrine in one word is plainly set down. You were dead in sins & trespasses. He saith not, that you were sicke, so as some little life was left in you, but you were altogether dead. The selfe same thing also hee confirmeth afterward, when he saith; that, in being regenerated by God, we were raised vp from the dead. If therefore the vnregenerate man be spiritually dead in sinnes, it followeth that he hath no more vnderstanding in things pertaining to eternall saluation, than hath a dead man in the things of this life.

Moreover, if a man vnregenerate be spiritually dead in  
sinnes,

sinnes, he hath no more power to doe a good deed, then a dead man hath to doe the actions of the body, Therefore euen as our soule giueth life to the body, so also the spirit of God is the life of our soule, being otherwise dead, and vnable to beleue or do any thing that is good.

*Tb.* Although I do wholly giue consent to this doctrine, which I see hath expresse grounds in the holy Scriptures, yet I will propound vnto thee a certaine obiection, sometimes put forth to my selfe; about the answering whereof I found no small difficulty: namely, that God seemeth to mocke vs, who so often by the Prophets exhorteth vs to turne vnto him, and to keepe his commandements, if it were not in our power, at least in some part, to do this. Furthermore, that exhortations be made in vain, the vse of admonitions is but needlesse, and that reprooves are but ridiculous, if it were not in the power of the sinner not to sin.

*Mat.* They that measure the strength of man by Gods commandements, be altogether deceiued. For Christ commandeth vs: Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God, with all thy heart with all thy soule, and with all thy mind. And againe, Be you perfect, as your Father which is in heauen is perfect, But what is he which confesseth not, that hee can neuer come to that diuine perfection, nor loue him with that loue that is due?

Mat. 23. 37

Therefore as it is notably written by *AVSTIN*, God commandeth the things which we cannot doe, that wee might know what we ought to aske of him. Which indeed may appeare cue by this, that euery where by the Prophets, the Lord commandeth vs to turne vnto him, and to repent vs of our sinnes. But *IEREMY* answereth, Conuert me Lord, & I shall be conuerted: when thou didst correct me, I did repent. For this cause the same *AVSTIN*: which handled this doctrine of free-will most excellently, writeth in another place, O Lord giue me that which thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.

In Enchirid.  
ad Lauren.  
De gra. &  
lib. arbit. 16.  
Ier. 31. 18.  
Eze. 18. 30.  
Ioel. 2. 2.  
Confes. 1. 10

*Theoph.* Indeed this is a solution, or answer to that obiection, not to be despised.

*Mat.* I doe adde, that it may bee gathered out of *PAVL*, that exhortations to holinesse of life, haue not their foundation vpon our naturall powers, but vpon the promise of God,

God,

God, wherein he promiseth to be with vs, not to helpe out Freewill in part, but wholly and altogether himselfe alone to make it good in vs.

*Theoph.* Bring some places out of PAVL, For the confirmation of this doctrine.

1. Thes. 5.  
23, 24.

*Mat.* Writing to the Theſſalonians, when hee hath admoniſhed them to liue blameleſſly, juſtly, and ſoberly, in loue and patience, hee praieth to ſanctiſie them, to the end they might be able to performe thoſe things: and at length ſaith; Faithfull is he that hath called you, which will alſo doe it. In another place alſo, after he had exhorted the Philippians, to worke out their owne ſaluation with feare and trembling, preſently he addeth: For it is God which worketh in you both the will and the dee-de, euen of his good pleaſure.

Phil. 2. 13.  
13.

*Theoph.* What uſe is there of exhortations, admonitions and reprehensions to the vnbeleeuers.

*Mat.* They ſhall be a witneſſe againſt them, when they come to the iudgement ſeat of God: For they ſhall the more bee conuicted of rebellion againſt God, and of the hardening of their owne hearts.

*Theoph.* I am now well furniſhed againſt thoſe, that ſhall hereafter ſet vpon me with that obiection.

To conclude, it ſeemeth to me, that this doctrine may fitly be referred to that, which ſometimes I haue heard of thee; namely, that all the finnes of men be of themſelues, and not of God; but that their good workes, if they doe any, be not of themſelues, but of God.

*Mat.* True, Neither is there any cauſe, why we ſhould feare to receiue this for true doctrine, forasmuch as it tendeth both to the glory of God, and the throwing downe of our ſelues, which is a moſt certaine marke, whereby we may diſcerne or know true doctrine from falſe, according to the rule of Chriſt.

Ioh. 7. 18.

In what ſence  
the holy  
Ghoſt is ſaid  
to be author  
of our vni-  
on with Chriſt.

*Theoph.* Now wee are to goe forward to the reſt. Wee haue at large handled the firſt effect of the holy Ghoſt, let vs therefore come to the other. How makeſt thou the holy Ghoſt the author of our vni-  
on, or being made one with Chriſt, which in the beginning of this Chapter, thou didſt attribute vnto faith?

*Mat.*

*Mat.* When I did attribute or giue it to faith, I did it according to the vse of the Scripture: but this I meant, that faith is the instrument, and as it were a spirituall hand, by the which we doe receiue Christ with all his gifts. In the meane time, this is to be vnderstood, that the holy Ghost is author of them al. For the vniting of vs to Christ, which is in heauen, is not done but by his owne diuine power: Adde hereunto, that the holy Ghost begetteth faith in vs, & thereby sanctifieth vs, that so we may be made fit to receiue Christ, & apply him with all his gifts vnto our selues.

*The fourth part of the Apostles Creed: which is concerning the Church.*

*Theoph.* We haue expounded three parts of the Creed: it remaineth that we come to the fourth, which concerneth the Church. Now there come two things into my mind, whereunto I would haue thee to answer. First,

1. What the Church is; And
2. Why thou saidst: that by the working of the holy Ghost, we are ioined with it.

*Mat.* The word Church, signifieth a companie: in this place it is taken for the company of the faithfull chosen of God.

But although the Church be onely one, which is the spouse and mysticall body of Christ, yet it is wont to be considered in two respects.

1. As it is inuisible. And
2. As it is visible.

*Theoph.* What doest thou vnderstand by the name of the inuisible Church?

*Mat.* All the elect, which may be diuided into three sorts. Of the inuisible Church.

1. The first, of them which already bee receiued into heauen, who are therefore called the Triumphant Church; because, hauing overcome all temptations and troubles, they enioy the heavenly glory.
2. The second, is of them which do yet liue in the earth.
3. The third, of them that are yet vnborne. Now these three parts in that last day shall be gathered together into one body, and they shall be a Church altogether Triumphant and Glorious.

*Theoph.*

Of the visible  
Church.

*Theoph.* Which is the visible Church?

*Mat.* The company of the faithfull, gathered together in the name of Christ, to bee instructed and confirmed in his faith, by the sincere preaching of the word, as also by the right and lawfull vse of the Sacraments; which are two most certaine markes, wherewith God would marke her out, and as it were set her forth to be seene, that shee might be knowne of all her children, and they might be gathered vnto her.

Now this is that which is called the Militant Church, because continually it warreth with the diuel, the flesh, and the world.

*Theoph.* Why will God haue all his children ioyne themselves to the visible Church?

*Mat.* That he may be worshipped of vs, which is, when we doe agree together in calling vpon him, and that he, as a good housholder, may feede vs with his word the spirituall foode, wherewith we may be daily strengthened, vntill he bring vs to the celestially inheritance.

*Theoph.* What is the vse of this article?

*Mat.* You shall most easily perceiue it, if you doe but marke the testimonies of praise and commendation, wherewith PAUL decketh the Church, which indeede are answerable to diuers places of the Prophets. Now they be three, and that most excellent: For he termeth her,

1. The House of God.
2. The Pillar of truth.
3. The Mother of all the faithfull.

*Theoph.* We are to examine the reason of these titles giuen vnto her. And first of all, why doest thou call it the house of God?

*Mat.* That we may vnderstand, that God dwelleth in his Church, doth defend it, and guide it by his holy spirit. Euen as Christ himselfe saith: Where two or three bee met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

*Theoph.* Why is it called the Pillar of truth?

*Mat.* Because by the ministry thereof, God preserueth his truth in the world.

*Theoph.* What is that truth?

*Mat.* Christ himselfe, when as hee is acknowledged to  
be

1 Tim. 3. 15  
Gal. 4. 26.

Math. 18. 20



be not onely very God & very man in one person, but also a Sauour and Redeemer, which is the most certaine truth, and most profitable to the belecuers: for by it they attaine eternall life. Which Christ himselfe affirmeth in these words, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Ioh. 14. 6.

*Theoph.* Therefore it followeth, that this Church which we belecue, forasmuch as it is the pillar of truth, cannot erre.

*Mat.* Indeed in those points which appertaine to the person and office of Christ, it cannot erre: but in some other parts of doctrine, it may erre, which falleth out not seldome.

*Theoph.* Why may it not erre in the things which concerne Christ, as well as in others?

*Mat.* Because by the testimony of *Paul*, Christ is the onely foundation of the Church, which being taken away, it can no more stand, then an house without a foundation.

1. Cor. 3. 12.

*Theoph.* What if the Church erred in those things?

*Mat.* It should then not be a Church, but rather the Synagogue of Satan: Seeing it had ouerthrowne or pulled downe Christ the true foundation of it.

*Theoph.* But Christ seemeth to haue ordained another foundation of the Church beside himselfe, namely *PETER* the Apostle, to whom he said, Thou art *PETER*, and vpon this rocke will I build my Church.

Of the foundation of the Church.

*Mat.* The name of rocke no way can or ought to be referred vnto *Peter* himselfe, although the words may seeme to beare it. For *Paul* affirmeth, that no other foundation can belaid by any, besides that which is laid, which is Iesus Christ, Moreover how absurd a thing should it bee that the Church which is inuisible, should haue her foundation in mortall man, and that which more is, one very weake, so as not long after he denied Christ? Verily, it had neede of a stronger foundation, that it may bee able to stand against so many assaults, wherewith it hath beene and still is set vpon, by the diuell and the world: euen from the beginning.

1. Cor. 3. 11.

*Theoph.* Deliuer therefore the true sence of these words of Christ to *Peter*.

*Mat.* Because *Peter* had confessed Christ to bee the Sonne of the liuing God, Christ answereth; But I say that thou

Math. 4. 18  
and 10. 21.

Vpon Iohn  
tract. 12. 4.

1. pet. 2. 5.

Why the  
Church is cal-  
led holy.

thou art PETER. Now he is called by that name which Christ had before giuen vnto SIMON, because hee was a liuing stone in the building of the Church; who acknowledged Christ to be the Sonne of God; and therefore the chiefe stone of the Church. When therefore he addeth; Vpon this Rocke I will build my Church; that is referred to that rocke which PETER himselfe had confessed. AVSTIN agreeth with this interpretation: for he saith, The Church is built vpon the rocke wherof euen PETER had his name; therefore truly the Lord saith; Vpon that rocke will I build my Church, PETER had said, Thou art Christ the Sonne of the liuing God. Vpon this rocke therefore, saith he; which thou hast confessed; I wil build my Church. For the rocke was Christ, vpon the which foundation, PETER himselfe was builded: For no other foundation can any man lay, but that which is already laid, which is Christ Iesus. These be the words of that Father: wherewith also agreeth that which PETER saith, when he exhorreth the faithfull, that as liuing stones, they would bee built vpon Christ, that chiefe stone. But he prooueth this out of the testimony of ESAY: Behold I put in Sion a chiefe corner stone, elect and precious; in whome whosoever beleueth shall not be ashamed. Hee addeth also out of the Psalme: The stone which the builders refused, is made the head of the corner, that is to say vpholdeth all the building.

*Theoph.* Hitherto wee haue heard sufficiently of the second thing testified in the praise of the Church: wee must come to the third. Why is it called the Mother of vs all?

*Mat.* First, because God therein hath begotten vs with the incorruptible seede of his word. And then, because he hath put vs ouer vnto it, as to a speciall good Mother, to be gouerned and brought vp, that wee may daily increase and grow in faith, vntill wee attaine to the inheritance of our heauenly Father. Wherefore, who soeuer refuse the gouernement of his Mother, can neither haue God for their Father, nor claime to themselues any right in his inheritance.

*Theoph.* Let vs consider the very words of the Creede; and first of all; Why is the Church called holy?

*Mat.* For two causes: the first and chiefeest whereof is this

this, because as PAUL speaketh, It is sanctified after that he hath cleansed it, by the washing of water, through the word. As if he should say, that it was made cleane from all sinne, by the pretious blood of Christ, which is daily presented vnto vs, both in the word and in the Sacraments. Eph. 5.26.

The other cause is, for that the members of it, which indeede are regenerated and sanctified by the holy Ghost, do apply themselues diligently to holinesse of life: wherein by the benefit of the Ministry of the Church, they go forward euery day somewhat. Notwithstanding in them selues it is certaine, they bee defiled with many filthinesses and sinnes, which indeede are not imputed vnto them: for they are partakers of Christs merits, by whose helpe they obtaine forgiveness of sinnes.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other title of the Church: why is it called Catholicke or Vniuersall?

*Mat.* That we may vnderstand, it is not now tied to any certaine place or people, as we read, it was vnder the Law, before the comming of Christ: but that it is dispersed and scattered throughout the whole world, and distinguished into many members, which are particular Churches, gathered together in sundry places, which notwithstanding make one body of the Church, for they be endued with the same faith, and hope in Christ. Why the Church is called Catholike.

*Theoph.* It may seeme then, that the Church which was before the comming of Christ, was diuers from ours. Of the church before Christ.

*Mat.* Thou gatherest ill: for although in some circumstances it differed from ours, yet it was one Church in substance, forasmuch as both of them acknowledged,

1. One and the selfe same Father, God.
2. One Iesus Christ, Redeemer, and Mediator.
3. Because also that olde Church had the same hope with vs, namely, to obtaine saluation by faith in him; by the which faith the beleeuers euen then communicated with his body, and therefore were partakers of his gifts.
4. Because they had the same ministry of the word and Sacraments with vs, as concerning the substance.

*Theoph.* But how could this be, that the faithfull should be partakers of the true body of Christ, which was not yet borne?

Apoc. 13. 8.

*Mat.* It was then indeede spirituallly receiued by faith, as it is this day of vs: this onely is the difference, that our faith looketh to Christ now long agoe manifested; but the faith of those Ancients looked to Christ, which was not then come. Neither were they therefore excluded from the true partaking of him. For all things are present with God Hence is that of *Iohn*; The Lambe (meaning Christ) slaine euen from the foundation of the world.

Ioh. 8. 56.

Christ also affirmeth the selfe same thing; when he saith, ABRAHAM reioiced to see this my day, and hee saw it, and was glad

*Theoph.* But bee there any places of Scripture, whereby this may bee determined, that the faithfull, which were vnder the Law, were truly and indeede partakers of Christs body?

1. Cor. 10. 3.

*Mat.* There be For *Paul* saith, that all the Fathers did eate the same spirituall foode with vs, and that they all dranke the same spirituall drinke: for they dranke of the spirituall rocke that folowed them, and that rocke was Christ. By which words he meaneth, that the Fathers by their Sacraments did no lesse communicate with the body of Christ and his gifts, than we doe at this day by ours.

*Theoph.* What then is the difference betweene their and our Church?

*Mat.* There be reckoned not one, but foure.

Col. 2. 17.

First, because the olde Church did set foorth Christ his death and resurrection darkely, by certaine outward ceremonies, as sacrifices, lights, washings, and such other, which of the same Apostle are called shadowes of things to come, but the body is Christ.

Wherefore, seeing that by his comming he hath put an end to those ceremonies, he hath now discovered and manifested himselfe farre more openly to vs For he commeth forth, as it were in the mid-day, abounding with his gifts, that euery one may see and know them. For this cause the Apostle compareth the Fathers which liued vnder the law, vnto children, which did learne as it were their letters and first grounds; to giue vs to vnderstand, that we may be called learned and skilfull, if we be compared with them.

[This therefore is the difference.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* Declare the second.

*Mat.* This consisteth in amendment of life; for as the knowledge of Christ is greater, so also the efficacy and working of the holy Ghost is far greater, which mortifieth our flesh; so as we do more earnestly obey his commandments, according to the promises declared by the Prophets; This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel: After those dayes (saith the Lord) I will put my Law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts: I will put my spirit within you, and will cause you to walke in my statutes, and to keepe my iudgements, that you may doe them. Yet not that the godly before the comming of Christ, were without the spirit of regeneration, but that we might be taught how the Lord in the very comming of Christ, by whose blood hee renewed the covenant with vs, did more abundantly bestow his gifts vpon his people. For this cause the Lord did suffer not a few blemishes of the Israelites, which among vs were not to be borne: no otherwise than as a most wise Father will beare with many childish faults of his sonnes, as long as they be children, but when they be come to yeares, he will in no case beare them.

*Theoph.* I would haue thee shew me some example.

*Mat.* I will alledge one; The bill of diuorcement, which was nothing else, but a liberty to put away the wife, euen for the smallest cause. But the Lord affirmeth, that it was permitted to the Israelites, for the hardnesse of their hearts, that is to say, as well for their rudenesse, as for their infirmity. Notwithstanding he sheweth, That for the time to come it was not lawfull, but for fornication.

*Theoph.* But it may be objected, that wee are so far off, from excelling the fathers of the Israelitish Church, in holinesse and sanctimony of life, that contrariwise, there bee not a few of them found, which did a great deale goe beyond vs, such as were MOSES, ELIAS, DANIEL, &c.

*Mat.* When wee speake of the difference betweene the Church of the Israelites and ours, wee must not alleadge some speciall gifts graunted to some speciall men; but it must be considered, what was the whole body of that Church, for therein standeth the difference.

*Theoph.* Declare the third difference.

*Mat.* It is herein, that eueralsting life was obscurely and darkly offered to the Israelites, wrapped or folded vp in earthly promises. For they were children, as *Paul* speaketh, whose age farre more esteemeth some finall things, than those that be of the best valuc. But now after wee be come to age, and are taught the Gospell, by meanes whereof the benefite of eternall life is much more plainly made knowne vnto vs, wee are in the very right way, led to the hope and meditation of it, neither doe wee stay in these earthly and fraile things. And this was the cause why the Fathers vnder the Law esteemed this life more than wee ought to esteeme it.

*Theoph.* Now remaineth the last difference.

*Mat.* It is that, whereof by the way wee made mention: namely, that the Church vnder the Law, was as it were bounded with the borders of Iudea, or shut vp within that countrey. But now it is scattered throughout the whole world, neither is it tyed to any place.

*Math 10. 5.*

*Mark. 16. 16.*

For this cause, Christ when he sent forth his Disciples to preach the Gospel before his death, in plain words forbade them to goe to the Gentiles, but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel. But after his resurrection, when he had put an end to the ceremonies of the Law, hee biddeth his Apostles, going into all the world, to preach the Gospel to euery creature.

Behold what the differences bee betweene the olde and our church. Now these haue beene the causes, that the bookes of the Bible, which respect the state of the Church before Christ was borne, had the name of the old Testament; and those which were written after his resurrection, are called the new Testament, or the new Couenant; yet not that there be two Couenants, or two Testaments betwixt God and his Church: for there is onely one which is diuersly considered.

*Theoph.* Let vs goe forward to the rest. What is the reason why we say; I beleue the Church, and not, I see the Church?

*Mat.* Although particular Churches be seene of vs, yet because there is intreated of the Vniuerfall Church, which

we



we cannot behold with the eies of the body, therefore we doe not say, I see, but I beleue the Church. I adde moreouer, that the Church properly is no other but that company of the elect. For the hypocrites and reprobates which are mingled with the particular Church, are not members of the vniuersall Church. I doe adde furthermore, for a larger declaration hereof, these two arguments: First,

I That it falleth out not seldome, that by the persecutions of the enemies, the Church is so scattered, that it seemeth almost to be cleane put out. Howbeit it is not so, but onely for a time it is remooued from our sight, even as the wheat lieth hidden vnder the chaffe. Which indeed came to passe in the daies of ELIAS: for the Prophet complained that he alone was left. For he thought that all the people were fallen away from the true Religion. Notwithstanding the Lord answered: There be remaining vnto me seuen thousand, which haue not bowed their knee before BAAL. Therefore when the Church is hidden either in the whole or in the parts, yet ought wee not thereupon to cease to beleue that it is. For the Lord said by the Prophet, that Israels seed should not faile, as long as the Sun and Moone should be in the heauens. The same thing doth Christ confirme, when he saith, that it shall neuer be, that the gates of hell shall overcome the Church, that is to say, that neither the Diuell nor his Angels shall euer be able, to bring to passe the finall or vtter destruction of the Church, howsoeuer God sometimes so giue them the bridle, that is to say, such libertie, that they bring vpon it great calamitie. The Church therefore may most fitly be copared to that bulle, which MOSES heretofore sauy in the wilderness, which burnt in the fire, & was not consumed.

*Theoph.* How doth the speech of the gates of hell, whereof Christ maketh mention, agree with the practises, deceits, and counsels of the Diuell?

*Mat.* It is a similitude or likenesse taken from commonwealthes, in the which in former times iudgment was vsed at the gates of their cities, where also the store of Armour and munition of wars was kept. Heereupon it grew, that commonly in auncient times the gates were taken for strength and counsell.

1. King. 19. 18  
12. am 1. 2

Ier. 31. 36

Mat

Exod. 3. 2

Iud. 3. 2

*Theoph.* Bring forth the other argument, by the which thou maist prooue, that the Catholike Church is to be beleued.

*Mat.* It is drawne from this: that although in it there haue alwaies beene many elect (seeing the word of God is neuer preached in vaine) yet neuerthelesse all they that ioine themselves to particular Churches, doe not straight-way belong to the vniuersall Church: that is to say, are not by and by of the number of the faithfull and chosen. For as (saith *AVSTIN*) there be many sheepe without the sheepfold of Christ, which God in his time will call; so there be many wolues in the very Church: whose hypocrisie the Lord in their time will discover. Therefore to vse the words of the Apostle God only knoweth who bee his. And this is the cause, why making mention of the inuisible Church, I comprehend vnder it the elect of God still liuing in the earth.

Rom. 45. vp.  
on Iohn.

1. Tim. 2.

*Theoph.* But are the elect themselves, being called of God, and ioined to the particular Churches, vncertaine of their saluation?

*Mat.* No not so. For each of them may know their own faith, by a discerning thereof put into them by the Holy Ghost; but anothers faith they cannot. The word of beleeuing containeth all these things. For it is as if thou saidest, I beleue that there is a certaine company of the faithfull and elect in the Church, which God descendeth in this world, of whose number I certainly know that I am. In the meane time Christian charity requireth this, that we iudge well of all those that haue ioined themselves to particular Churches, so long as they shew themselves tractable, and doe obey admonitions.

*Theoph.* It commeth to my remembrance, that the article of the Church is set after the article of the holy Ghost, because the holy Ghost beareth witnesse within vs, that we be members of it.

*Mat.* Not onely for this cause, but especially because it is gathered together by the diuine working of it by the which indeede wee are knit together into one bodie with Christ, and are partakers of all his gifts: that is to say, the merit of his death is communicated vnto vs, by the which

we obtaine forgiuenesse of finnes; the force also of his resurrection is imputed to vs, whereby wee shall rise againe glorified in that last day, and shall lue eternally with him. All which things are in the Creed in exact order set down presently after the article of the Church.

*Theoph.* Hitherto we haue spoken sufficiently of the true Church; and so we haue dispatched the first point that I propounded. Let vs therefore come to the other. What is the reason that thou saidest, we were no lesse ioyned by the holy Ghost with the Church, than with Christ? Of the communion of Saints,

*Mat.* Because it cannot ioyne the faithfull with Christ, but it doth also ioyne them together among themselves, euen as the members cannot be ioyned with the head, but they be also vnited together into the body. Now this is a most fit similitude, and best agreeth to the vnion which we haue with Christ. For as the head, if it be ioyned with the members, guideth them, nourisheth them, and giueth them life and motion; euen so Christ performeth all these things to his Church, with the which hee is made one by the working of the holy Ghost. For this cause is this sentence so often repeated of the Apostle; Christ is the head of the body of the Church. The faithfull are the body of Christ, and members for their part. Therefore Christ himselfe giueth his owne name to the Church, as whē he reproued PAVL; SAVL, SAVL, why persecutest thou mee? and this he doth because the head and members be one.

*A short exposition of the Apostles Creed.*

*Theoph.* Thou hast made mee to vnderstand all the articles of the Apostles Creede; Neuerthelesse, to the end the things which thou hast said may sticke the faster in my minde, I desire that the summe of the same articles may be againe laid forth in some short Paraphrase, or exposition, as also to be taught how the faithfull may apply them to themselves.

*Mat.* Thou desirest a thing (except I bee deceived) not vnprofitable. Therefore every one may comprehend the sum of the Creed, and apply it to himselfe, in these words; I beleene in I put my whole trust in God the Father, as in him which God the Father will blesse mee. For I doubt not, seeing he is the Father of them.

Iesus Christ, but he is also my Father, and therefore loueth me perfectly and infinitely, euen as he himselfe is perfect and infinite.

Almighty  
maker of  
heauen and  
earth.

Now, that will of his cannot be hindred by impotency or weaknesse, as that of our earthly parents is wont to be. For he is omnipotent, and hath all creatures, as well those that be in heauen, as those that be in earth, in his hand to do me good, to keepe me safe from all sinnes, and to helpe me in all my necessities, so far forth as he himselfe shall know to be expedient for me: who also doth so keepe in, bridle, and hold backe the diuell, and all mine enemies, that they cannot by any meanes hurt me.

And in Iesus  
Christ his on-  
ly sonne our  
Lord.

Iohn. 20. 17.

I doe also put my whole trust in Christ Iesus our Lord, the onely Sonne of God, of the same essence with the Father and the holy Ghost, who came downe into the earth that he might lift mee vp into heauen, which was made man, to the end he might haue the same God with me, and I might haue the same Father with him. For these bee his words, I ascend or goe vp to my Father, and your Father, and my God and your God.

Which was  
conceiued by  
the holy  
Ghost, borne  
of the Virgin  
Mary, suffe-  
red vnder  
Pontius Pi-  
late.

Who also, that he might reconcile me to God the Father, was conceived by the holy Ghost, and borne of the Virgin MARY: Moreouer, vnder PONTIUS PILATE he suffered all the reproches which I had deserued. For hee was bound as a guilty person, that I might be loosed out of the chaine of the diuell and sinne. Hee was condemned of an earthly iudge, notwithstanding he were most iust and innocent, that I which am guiltie of innumerable transgressions, might bee discharged before the tribunall seate of the heauenly Iudge.

Crucified  
dead and  
buried.

Who in scorne was cloathed in purple, and crowned with a crowne of thornes, that he might make me partaker of his glorious crowne, and kingly dignitie.

He descen-  
ded into Hel-

Who was nailed to the Crosse, dead and buried, that he might deliuer me from the curse of death, and slauerie of sinne, and the tyranny of the diuell.

Who for me descended into hell, while as he in the very time of that passion, suffered both in soule and body, the fearefull torments of the wrath of God, which I had deserued, and wherewith I should for euer haue been overwhelmed

whelmed in hell: who also the third day rose againe from the dead, that for my sake death being fully ouercome, hee might giue me life.

The third day  
he rose again  
from the  
dead.

Who finally ascended into heauen, from whence I was barnished for my sins, that he might set open a passage for mee into it, and might in my name take possession of the heauenly kingdome.

He ascended  
into Heauen

But now he sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty and there continually maketh intercession for me with his Father, and offered for mee the merit of his death, that so hee may become mercifull vnto me.

Sitteth at the  
right hand of  
God the Fa-  
ther almighty

I beleue also that at the last day hee shall come visibly downe from the heauens to iudge both quicke and dead. Neither is there any cause why I should feare or be afraide of condemnation, seeing I shall stand at the iudgement seat of that Iudge, which is also my patron and aduocate. I do therefore assuredly know, that hee will giue sentence on my side and absolute me, that I may be partaker of his glory.

From thence  
shall he come  
to iudge the  
quicke and  
dead.

I doe also put my whole trust in the holy Ghost, which is God of the same essence with the Father and the Sonne, who also hath ioyned me with Christ, and sanctified mee in him.

I beleue in  
the holy  
Ghost,

which beareth witnesse with my spirit, that I am the child of God.

Which maketh request for mee with sighes that cannot be expressed.

Which comforteth me in aduersitie

Which kindleth a desire in vs to leade our liues in the obedience of God, strengtheneth vs, & finally giueth vs the gift of perseuerance to the end. Confirmeth and strengtheneth me against all temptations. If at anytime I fall, he raiseth me vp by true repentance, and assureth me of assistance with his power, euen vnto death.

I beleue the Catholike Church, gathered together by the power of the holy Ghost, that is to say, the company of the faithfull chosen of God, which are scattered thorowout the whole world, of whose number I doe certainly know my selfe to be one.

The holy Ca-  
tholike  
Church.

I beleue that all yce which are faithfull, are so vnited

The commu-  
nion of sainte.

and

and ioyned with Christ our head, that wee are made partakers of his gifts, that is, of the merit of his death and the power of his resurrection.

The remission  
of sinnes,  
Resurrection  
of the body,  
The life euer-  
lasting.

Whereupon I am assured of the full forgiveness of my sinnes, and of my glorious resurrection in the last day, (which the partaking of eternal life shall follow) together with all the faithfull and elect, with whom hee shall for euer be praised of me in the heauens.

*Theoph.* I haue verily heard of thee an excellent Paraphrase or short exposition of the Apostles creed, and such a one as doth not a little serue for edification. But that thou maiest prouide for, and help the memory of the vnlearned, draw all this into a short summe as thou canst.

The summe  
of the Creed.

*Mat.* It cannot be made shorter than if thou say: I put the whole hope of my saluation in one Iesus Christ crucified, who being giuen vnto me by the mercie of the Father, communicath himselfe vnto me by the power of the holy Ghost, to make me partaker of the merit of his death, and also of eternall life. Now this agreeth with that which the Apostle saith: I esteemed not to know any thing among you, but Iesus Christ and him crucified.

2 Cor. 13.

*Theoph.* I am fully satisfied with this exposition of the Apostles Creed, and it containeth many things, which bring no small comfort to the hearers. And I beseech our good and heauenly Father, to engraue them in our hearts by the working of the holy Ghost, that so wee may earnestly acknowledge & steadfastly belecue that immeasurable loue wherewith he loueth vs in Christ Iesus, by whom he hath redeemed vs from euermore death, and hath taken vs for his children, that at length we may be heires of his kingdome.

*Mat.* But now night draweth on, wherefore I would aduise, that wee deferre the rest, till to morrow: Farewell!

THEOPHILVS.

*Theoph.* Fare you well also MATHEVV.

*The end of the first Booke.*



# THE SECOND BOOKE OF *Christian Religion.*

Wherein the testimonies of our  
*Saluation are declared.*

## CHAP. I.

*Of good works, by the which the faith that is bidden in our hearts is manifested, that it may be seen & known.*

THEOPHILVS.

**G**Od saue thee most dearly beloved MATHEW.  
Mat. God saue thee also most louing THEOPHILVS: Hast thou thought vpon the things, which wee handled yester-day?

*Theoph.* Yea indeede most diligently, insomuch as they occupied my mind in my sleepe: whereof to make profe, if it be not troublefom to thee, I will comprehend them in a short sum, which shall be as an entrance for vs to the rest.

*Mat.* Thou shalt doe me a very great pleasure.

*Theoph.* The summe of our speech yesterday may be referred to foure heads.

1 The first whereof, is of God, distinct in three persons. Who also by his prouidence gouerneth all things, is most perfectly iust, and most perfectly mercifull.

2 The second is of man, who being by his owne nature a most wretched sinner, is guilty of eternall death before the iudgement seate of God.

3 The third is of Christ Iesus, whose death is a most present remedy for our saluation.

4 The fourth is of faith, whereby that remedie is applied to vs for our saluation.

Now vnlesse I bee deceiued, order requireth, that wee speake of good wokes, which doe necessarily cleaue vnto faith, and be effects of it. Moreouer, seeing in the first two chapters of the former Booke, it hath bene declared what manner one God is, and the third and fourth Chapters what a one he sheweth himselfe towards vs; this one thing seemeth now to remaine, that wee vnderstand, how wee should

should carrie our selues towards him, that is, to say, what workes are to be done of vs, that we may obey him, and be acceptable to his Maieftie.

*Mat.* Thou hast very well deliuered the summe of our yesterdaies talke: I doe also allow the order propounded by thee concerning good workes.

This one thing remaineth, that you moue your questions of them in some easie method, to the end that this place which of it selfe is some what intricate and doubtful, may be plainly and clearly handled of vs.

*Theoph.* I haue no easier method, than that which sometimes I learned of thee, namely, that all this discourse bee brought vnto three heads.

1. First, what be those good workes, to be done of vs, that we may please God.

2. How we may performe those workes.

3. And thirdly, to what end we must doe them, and what is the vse of them.

But in the former booke, when we speake of regeneration, we did sufficiently discusse this second point. For wee taught that man of himselfe could doe no good thing, and that God by his spirit, wrought in vs both to will and to be able to doe. Wee are therefore to examine the other two points which are behinde, which will cause vs to diuide this chapter into two parts, if it so seeme good vnto you.

*The first part of this Chapter sheweth what good workes we ought to doe.*

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore come to the first part: namely what good workes are to be done that we may obey God.

*Mat.* Before wee goe any further, wee are to call vpon God, without whose guidance we cannot thinke of, much lesse performe, any good thing. I doe therefore beseech our good God and heauenly father, to giue vs the spirit of wisdom and vnderstanding, that the things which wee shall speake of good workes, may agree with the truth, so as they may tend to his glory, and the building of his Church. Now *THEOPHILVS*, doe I answere to thy question; That we must doe those good workes to obey God, which himselfe hath commanded in his owne Law.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* For he hath plainly forbidden to adde any thing *Deut. 4. 2.* to it, or take ought from it, and hath commanded that *Deut. 5. 32* no man should turne aside from it, either to the right hand, or to the left.

*Theoph.* What if men be so rash that they dare do it?

*Mat.* The Lord will not accept their foolish deuices for good workes, but will demand of them, that which in former times he demanded of the Israelites: Who required *Esa. 1. 12.* these things at your hands?

*Theoph.* I confesse it to be a most iust and righteous thing that the worship of God should bee according to his owne prescript, and not after the inuentions of men: forasmuch as wee also which are created of him, do require this of our seruants, that they serue vs according to our direction.

*Mat.* Right: for otherwise wee might thinke our selues not the masters, but the seruants of our seruants, Should it therefore be righteous and iust, that God which is our Creator and Lord, should allow that in vs, which we our selues condemne in our seruants, as a thing vnrighteous and vniust.

*Theo.* Seeing they only be good works which God hath commanded in his law; let vs see what the law of God is.

*Mat.* It is that which himselfe deliuered to his people by the hand of *Moses*, which also with his owne finger he wrote in two Tables of stone, forty dayes after the deliuerance of the people out of their bondage in *Aegypt*, which is also commonly called the morall law; beginning thus, Heare Israel, I am the Lord thy God.

The Morall  
Law.  
*Exod. 20. 2.*  
*Deut. 5. 6.*

*Theoph.* Why is it called Morall?

*Mat.* Because it intreateth of manners, as it appeareth by the etymology or true interpretation of the word. For it sheweth vs the vertues to be followed, to obey God, as also the vices to be auoided, lest we incurre his displeasure.

But it is also called Morall, to pur a difference betweene the Ceremoniall, which comprehendeth the ceremonies prescribed of God in the old Church, as also betweene the Iudiciall or Politicall law, which containeth iudgements, and the penalties to be inflicted vpon such as breake this Morall Law.

The Morall  
Law distinct  
from Cere-  
moniall and  
Iudiciall.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* Is not this morall law, the same doctrine whereof the Philosophers wrote so many books, and which they called Morall Philosophie?

The Morall law grauen in the minds of men as it were reuened by Moses, and expounded in many places of Scripture.

*Mat.* Yes verily. For it is nothing else, but the Law of nature, which God hath engrauen in the hearts of men; which also, because by little & little it wore out (for it was greatly darkened by sinne) he did as it were renew by the proclaiming and writing of it. Therefore concerning the Philosophers, they onely attained vnto, and taught the shadow of that, the body whereof, & the very truth it selfe, is most briefly purtraied or painted in this law; and is after beautifully set out in the proper colours in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles. For the Prophets and Apostles, so often as they intreate of vertues and vices; bee the true interpreters of the Law.

*Theoph.* Wherefore saiest thou that the Prophets and Apostles, when they speake of vertues and vices, be the true interpreters of this Law?

*Mat.* Forasmuch as the Lord forbad to adde any thing to the Law, or take ought from it, it followeth necessarily, that it is most perfect, and that therefore whatsoever the Scripture in any place doth command or forbid vs, ought of necessitie to be referred vnto the law and be accounted an exposition of it. And indeede by this meanes he would take away all excuse from the transgressors of the Law.

*Theoph.* How?

The Moral law comprised in very few words.

*Mat.* First, that no man should pretend the largenesse of it as an excuse, why he had not learned it by heart; the Lord would haue it brought into so many precepts, as we haue fingers vpon our hands. Whereupon, more than once it is called of **M O S E S** : Ten words.

More largely declared.

Afterward, least any by the shortnesse should seeke to excuse himselfe, that he could not come to the vnderstanding of it, the Lord would expound and declare his owne mind more largely by his Prophets and Apostles.

### *The exposition of the Morall Law.*

*Theoph.* Wee are therefore to examine this Morall Law; How many parts be there of it?

*Mat.* The Lord himselfe is the diuider of it, and hath diuided

diuided it into two Tables. In the former whereof, beeing perfected in foure Commandements, hee would establish true religion: for, it teacheth all the worship which hee requireth of vs. But in the latter, in sixe Commandements he hath taught, that loue, friendship, and fellowship, ought to be kept among men: for in it hee hath commanded all those things which serue to maintaine peace and agreement amongst vs. Briefly, the first Table commandeth all those duties which man oweth vnto God: and the latter, al that man oweth to man, according to the will of God. For the commandements of the latter Table are to be referred to the former, that is to say, they ought to be kept, not indeede for our neighbours sake, but for Gods sake, who hath commanded them.

The summe  
of the Morall  
Law.

*The first Table of the Law.*

*Theo* Now we must come to the exposition of the foure Commandements of the first Table. I doe therefore demand of thee, what order thou thinkest meete to be kept, that the whole matter may be made the plainer?

*Mat.* 1. My aduice is, that in the first place, we expound the Preface set before the law.

The order of  
the first Ta-  
ble.

2. Secondly, I will deliuer some generall rules of speciall good vse, to giue light to euery Commandement.

3. Which things beeing set downe, these foure commandements of the first Table shall generally be expounded, and withall, we will obserue, how well they agree one with the other. And at length we will come to the exposition of each Commandement by it selfe.

*The Preface of the Law.*

Heare O Israel, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

*Theoph.* I will follow the order which thou aduiseest, and will begin at the Preface of the Law. What then is the meaning of it?

*Mat* First, the Lord would haue vs attend to the hearing of the Law when he saith: Heare Israel.

2. He doth also challenge to himselfe power, and the right of authoritie in these words; I am the Lord: wherein  
he

he sheweth, that we owe him obedience as vnto our Lord.

3. But because he requireth of vs, not a constrained but a voluntary and willing obedience, he allureth vs vnto it, by a rehearſal of his loue towards vs, & that is propounded in these words, *Thy God*, that is to say, which doth embrace thee with good will and fauour.

Finally, he bringeth foorth a notable testimonie of that loue, when he saith; Which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. In which wordes hee declareth the selfe same thing, as if hee should say; I haue deliuered you from the tyranny of the diuell and sinne, that I might bring you to eternall life. For that temporall benefite in times past bestowed vpon the people of Israel, was a type or figure of the spirituall deliuerance of the Church.

*Theoph.* But the Lord seemeth not to speake to vs in these words, Heare Israel, but onely to the Israelites that came of *ABRAHAM* and *IACOB*, to whome the name of *ISRAEL* was giuen by the Angell.

*Gal. 3. 7.* *Mat.* The Apostle witnesseth, that all they that bee of faith, are the children of *ABRAHAM*. And therefore in the name of *ISRAEL*, all the faithfull are spoken vnto: and yet not that the vnfaithfull & vnbeleeuers are exempted from keeping of the Law; but because they haue not eares to heare, much lesse an heart to vnderstand, therefore the Lord speaketh not vnto them.

*Theoph.* I haue attained the sence and meaning of this Preface. Now declare those generall rules, which thou saidst gaue light to the vnderstanding of the Law.

*Mat.* They be Three, the first whereof is this, that when God commandeth good, he doth not onely forbid the euill that is contrary vnto it, which also is done in the laws of men; but when he forbiddeth euill, he commandeth the good that is contrary vnto it: and this is peculiar or proper to the law of God. For example. When God forbiddeth vs to take his name in vaine, hee doth on the contrary side command that wee hallow and honour it. When hee forbiddeth, that any man steale, he commandeth vs to giue our selues vnto charity. And so of the rest of the commandements.

*Theoph.*



*Theoph.* Why are almost all the commandements delivered rather negatively than affirmatiuely, that is to say, so as they rather forbid euill, than command that which is good?

*Mat.* Indeed that is well marked of you: for onely two, namely the last of the first Table, wherein the obseruation of the Sabbath day, and the first of the second Table, wherein the honour of parents be commanded, bee pronounced affirmatiuely, all the rest negatively, and so forbid euill. But this was done that we might vnderstand, that no man can giue his minde to that which is good, before he haue laide aside the euill that is contrary to it. Euen as wee see that thornes must be first pulled vp, before good seede be sown. Therefore the Prophet calling the Israelites to repentance, saith; Plough vp your fallow ground. *Ier 4.3.* and sow not among thornes. Moreouer, euery where in the holy Scriptures is this order kept, that first it forbiddeth euill, before it command good: as where the Prophets say: Cease to doe euill, learne to doe well; Decline from euill, and do that which is good. *Esa. 1.16. Psal 34.13*

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the second rule.

*Mat.* The Lord minding to forbid diuers euils of the same kinde, hee comprehended them in the name of the greatest, and as it were the chiefest, to the end wee might know, that the sinnes which seeme to be most small by the iudgement of men, are accounted with God of the same nature with that vnder the which they bee forbidden: As for example. When God would forbid murtherers, reuenges, iniuries, and priuie hatreds, hee comprehended them all vnder the word MYRTHER, to teach vs, that hee which hateth his brother, is a murtherer; as IOHN saith. The same is to be said of him, which looketh vpon a woman to lust after her: for Christ affirmeth, that such a one hath committed adultery in his heart. *1.Ioh. 3.15. Math. 5.28*

*Theoph.* The third rule is behind.

*Mat.* When any vice is forbidden, not onely they bee forbidden that be of the same kind, but also all the degrees by the which men come vnto them, yea, and all such things, which by any meanes may minister occasion of our falling into such vices. On the contrary side, when vertue is commanded

manded all those things to bee commanded, that may draw vs on forward to it.

*Theoph.* Having now deliuered those generall rules, we are to consider the coherence or agreement of the foure commandements of the first Table, according to the order which you did prescribe.

How the foure  
commande-  
ments of the  
first Table a-  
gree toge-  
ther.

*Mat.* I did therefore set downe this order, because it will bring greater light to each commandement. Thou hast heard already, that in the first Table, God hath commanded the worship due vnto him. Seeing therefore we ought to worship him no lesse in our bodies, than in our soules, as he that is a Creator of both.

In the first commandement, he setteth out the duty of our soule: for he sheweth what inward knowledge hee requireth of vs.

In the second, he reformeth the disposition and behaviour of our bodies, in the things which appertain to his worship. And together condemneth Idolatry, wherein men do chiefly sinne against this commandement.

In the third, hee restraineth our speech: for by it wee ought to declare that inward worship.

In the fourth hee appointeth a certaine day of the weeke wherein those things may be called to practise, as wel those before mentioned, as those also which be commanded in the latter Table; and this indeed is the cause, why it is placed betweene both the Tables.

### *The first Commandement.*

Thou shalt haue none other Gods before my face.

*Theoph.* Let vs at length come to the speciall exposition of the first commandement. What the meaning of it is, it is sufficiently vnderstood by that which hath bin said. Let vs therefore see what be the parts of it, then let vs follow each of them in their order.

*Mat.* Seeing this commandement is deliuered Negatiuely, by our first rule it containeth the Affirmatiue vnder it. Therefore it is to be diuided into two parts.

1. In the first, which is not expressed, hee will haue vs to acknowledge him for our God.

2. In the latter, which is indeed expressed, hee forbid-  
det

deth that we acknowledge any other for our God, beside himselfe.

*Theo.* Of how many parts standeth that acknowledgement which God requireth?

*Mat.* Vpon foure: namely,

1. Adoration, or worship.
2. Trust
3. Inuocation, or prayer.
4. And Thanksgiuing.

Now this acknowledgement proceedeth from knowledge: for hee cannot bee acknowledged, except he be first knowne.

*Theoph.* Shew this vnto me in these seuerall parts.

*Mat.* First, we cannot worship him (now, he is worshipped when euery one of vs submitteth himselfe to his greatness) vnlesse wee also acknowledge him our Creator and Lord. Wee cannot put our trust in him, but wee must confesse him to be omnipotent & perfectly good, that hee may helpe our necessities. Wee will neuer thinke vpon praying, and giuing thanks vnto him, except wee be well assured that he is the fountaine and wel-spring of all good things.

*Theoph.* Are these foure vertues only included in the first commandment?

*Mat.* If thou respect the substance, these onely: Howbeit many other spring from them. For true adoration or worship, hath alwaies pietie adioined with it, that is to say, a childe-like feare, and willing obedience towards him.

Out of trust, ariseth

1. Hope, that is, a certaine looking for the fruition of the heauenly promises.
2. Patience in aduersity.
3. Perseuerance, or continuance in his seruice.
4. A holy security, so long as we keepe our selues within the bounds of our callings.

From Praier and Thanksgiuing springeth true humilitie of heart. For by them we be admonished, that we are empty of all kind of good things, vntill God bestow them vpon vs, and that if there bee any good thing in vs, it is of God. That humilitie also bringeth forth modesty, which causeth vs not to desire a higher place, but to bee content

with the condition whereunto God hath called vs.

*Theoph.* Forasmuch as wee haue reckoned vp the vertues contained in this commandement, now wee must oppose or set against them the vices whereunto they be contrarie.

*Mat.* These are,

1. Rebellion against God.
2. Doubting of his promises.
3. Desperation.
4. Impatience in aduersitie.
5. Inconstancy in the worship of God, and in our owne vocation.
6. Falling away from the truth of the Gospel.
7. Pride.
8. Disdaine.
9. Ambition.
10. Faint-heartednesse in good things; and finally rashnesse, which aduentureth vpon vnneccessary dangers, vnder a colour of Gods providence.

The latter  
part of the  
first commandement.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other part of this commandement. Now in it is forbidden, that we acknowledge any other but the true God. How do we fall into this sinne?

*Mat.* When we giue vnto creatures those foure points, or any of them: for then we make them our gods, when we ascribe the things vnto them, which appertaine to one God. Therefore in this Commandement the Lord saith not; Thou shalt acknowledge me for thy God, but, Thou shalt haue no other Gods before mee: but in these words he compriseth three things.

First, that we ought to haue one God.

Secondly, that himsele is he, whom we are to acknowledge for our God, euen as it is plainly expressed by him in the Preface, in these words, I am the Lord thy God

Thirdly that it is not sufficient if we acknowledge him for our God; except we acknowledge him alone, so as wee ioyne no other gods, as it were fellowes vnto him, which they doe especially, that pray vnto Saints, and put their trust in them, whatsoeuer they may pretend, or howsoeuer they may seek to shift the matter.

*Theo.* Is it not also forbidden, that we should in any case put our trust in the liuing? as for example, in our kinsfolks  
and

and friends, to craue their helpe if need be, or to giue them thanks for the benefits which we haue receiued?

*Mat.* No, not so, so as we acknowledge them onely as instruments, by which God will helpe vs, and that they haue their will and abilitie to do vs good from God: for then we put not our trust in the creature, but in the Creator himselfe, in whom onely we confesse is power to helpe vs: without whom men can haue no helpe at all for vs. Notwithstanding it is meete, that we do giue them thanks, so often as we receiue any benefit from them, so long as we remember that the chiefe thanks are to be reserved vnto God, the true giuer of all gifts.

*Theoph.* What if we put our trust in creatures more than the Creator?

*Mat.* Then be they our gods: therefore *PAVL* speaking *Col. 3. 5.* of couetousnesse, calleth it idolatrie: by which words he meaneth, that couetous men make their riches their gods, because they trust in them more than in God himselfe. Which indeede is not onely true in that, but also as oft as wee preferre any other creature before the Creator, whether wee feare, loue, or obey it more; for then we make it our God. Therefore *PAVL* speaking of such, who, that they may liue daintily and securely, cast off the seruice of God, saith; Their God is their belly.

*Theoph.* I thinke that to bee the meaning of Christ, when he saith: Call no man your father on the earth, for one is your father which is in heauen. *Mat. 23. 9.*

*Mat.* It is so indeede: for in those words he doth not onely warne vs to acknowledge God for the chiefe father, but especially to loue, feare, and worship him farre aboue our earthly parents, and all other that be set ouer vs.

*Theoph.* Now do I vnderstand in what maner we should seeke for helpe at the hands of men, and trust in them without diminishing the honour of God. But what letteth vs that we may not doe the same towards the Saints who are already receiued into heauen, that is to say, cal vpon them and in some sort put our trust in them, vpon condition, that wee take them as instruments appointed of God for our helpe?

*Mat.* God verily giueth this abilitie to those that bee a-

liue,

Eccles. 9. 6.

lue, yea he hath commanded that one should helpe another: but this cannot be in the dead: for SALOMON saith; Also their loue, and their hatred, and their enuie is now perished, and they haue no more portion for euer, in all that is done vnder the Sunne.

*Theoph.* How knowest thou, that God hath not giuen this power to the dead, to be able to helpe vs, and that therefore we ought not to pray vnto them, when any necessity presseth vs?

Ier. 17. 10.  
Psal. 7. 10.

*Mat.* There is no one example of this in all the Scripture, which notwithstanding is the most certaine rule of truth. Moreouer, it teacheth vs, that God onely knoweth the things that be absent, and vnderstandeth the heart of man, so as hee heareth, and fauourably heareth our praiers and complaints, and helpeth vs.

Wherefore no man can call vpon the dead, or can any way trust in them, but he taketh away the honour due vnto God, which he giueth vnto them, and therefore maketh them his God.

Psal. 81. 11.  
Heb. 1. 14.

*Theoph.* If it will be none otherwise, the things which haue beene spoken of the dead, seeme not to appertaine vnto the Angels, specially seeing that it is manifest by the testimony of the Scripture, that God oftentimes useth their seruice to helpe vs, and that they be conuerfant amongst vs, so as they may heare our praiers.

Therefore it shall be no hurt, if we call vpon them to helpe vs, as we doe vpon the liuing; yet with this condition, that we take them only for his instruments appointed by himselfe.

*Mat.* Thou gatherest ill, for they cannot helpe vs; saue in those things which God hath expressely commanded them, which indeede be vnknowne vnto vs. But forasmuch as they do most readily performe the things they be commanded, it is not necessarie to call vpon them, although we our selues knew those things. Howbeit it is altogether necessarie to speake to the liuing here vpon the earth, because for the most part they scarce yeeld any helpe except they bee so called vpon that it trouble them. But whereas thou saidst, that the Angels be amongst vs, doe vnderstand what we need, & heare our praiers, it is indeed

true



true. Neuerthelesse they cannot be euery where, nor know all things; for that is proper to God only: which is a cause that we ought not to pray vnto them. But although all the things which we haue alleaged were of no force; there is no commandement of it in all the Scripture, not any example whereby wee may be enformed, that worshiping of Angels is pleasing to God. And PAUL affirmeth, that whatsoeuer is done without faith, is sinne. Rom. 14. 23.

*Theoph.* Now the exposition of this commandement wanteth this one thing, that thou shew why these words be added; In my sight, or before me,

*Mat.* That he might more and more keepe vs from the transgressing of it, while he teacheth how great iniurie is done to his Maiestie, when we dare commit so hainous an offence euen in his presence. For, although impietie and vngodlinesse be hidden in the heart, yet it is manifest to the eyes of the Lord, whereunto all things are naked & open, Heb. 4. 13. saith the Apostle. It is therefore as if an vn honest woman should prouoke and set on fire the minde of her husband, by bringing before his face the party with whome she plaieth the harlot, and by committing of the very act of vncleaneesse in his presence.

### The second Commandement.

Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen image, nor the likenesse of the things that be in heauen aboue, nor of the things that be in the earth beneath, nor of the things that be in the waters vnder the earth. Thou shalt not bow downe to them nor worship them. For I the Lord thy God am a ialous God, visiting the sinnes of the fathers vpon the children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate mee, and shewing mercy to thousands of them that loue me, and keepe my commandements.

*Theoph.* Thou hast satisfied me concerning the first commandement: let vs goe forward to the second. How many parts hath it?

*Mat.* Three.

1 The first of the forbidding of the things wherein a man may sinne in the outward worship due vnto God.

2 The second is of things commanded, which are to be performed

performed in the profession of that worship, which is done by the outward behauiour of the body: and this precept is comprehended vnder the prohibition by the first generall rule,

3 The third containeth threatnings against the breakers of the Law, and setteth before vs a promise to such as keepe it.

*Theoph.* Let vs in the first place consider of that prohibition.

*Mat.* It is contained in these words: Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen image, neither any likenesse of the things that bee in heauen aboue, nor of the things that be in the earth beneath, nor of the things that bee in the waters vnder the earth. Thou shalt not bow downe to them nor worship them.

*Theoph.* Why, after the words, Thou shalt make thee no grauen image, is it presently added, Nor any likenesse?

*Mat.* It is, that we may know, that pictures painted, or any other kinde of images, be forbidden of God, no lesse than grauen images, which are by name mentioned;

*Theoph.* What vnderstandest thou by the things that are in heauen?

*Mat.* The sunne, moone, stars, birds: and vnder the things that be vpon the earth are comprehended, men, brute beasts, plants, trees: and finally by those that be in the waters, fishes. Moreouer the waters that is the sea, are said to be vnder the earth, in respect of men that do inhabit it: for otherwise the sea together with the earth, make a globe, whereof there is not one part higher or lower than another.

*Theo.* Why should God thus reckon vp all his creatures?

*Mat.* Because there was no kinde of them, which the heathen did not at that time abuse to idolatry: which custome the Iewes themselves followed, notwithstanding this prohibition giuen them.

*Theoph.* But in this place there is no mention of spirituall and heauenly things, whereof neuertheless there is very often abuse among the heathen to idolatry.

*Mat.* True. But there is no mention of them, because they cannot be represented, but by borrowing the forme or shape of the visible things, which in this place are reckoned

Ezec. 3. 2. 3.  
&c.

knowne vp. Therefore vnder the visible, the inuisible also are comprehended.

*Theoph.* But are all kindes of pictures and images forbidden of God?

*Mat.* They are vtterly condemned, if they be made to represent his Maiesty: for that is directly forbidden by him. Deut. 4. 15.  
Ages. 17. 28

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because it cannot be done but to the contempt of his diuine Maiesty, forasmuch as he which is eternall, infinite, without body, and inuisible, is represented in the likeness of a fraile and transitory creature, finite, hauing a body, & being visible. For this cause *ESAY* going about to reprove the madnesse of the idolaters of his time, that did set forth God in a visible shape, describeth his wonderful greatnes, howbeit in termes agreeable to our capacity, when he saith: Who hath measured the waters in the fist, and compassed heauen with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountaines in a weight, and the hills in a ballance? And a little after he addeth; To whom then will ye make God like, or what similitude will ye set vp vnto him? Esay. 40. 12.  
Esay. 40. 18

*Theoph.* I grant that God is not to be set out in any visible shape: but why may it not bee lawfull so to represent things created?

*Mat.* It is lawfull: so long as it is not done to adore or worship them: which the Lord straightway addeth after the forbidding of making images, in these words: Thou shalt not bow downe to them, nor worship them.

*Theoph.* Thinkest thou that it is all one for a man to bow himselfe to idols, and to adore or worship them?

*Mat.* Yea verily. For adoration signifieth all religious worship: but no man boweth himselfe to idols, but with religious worship.

*Theo.* What vnderstandest thou by the name of worship?

*Mat.* That they be not apparelled and decked; that incense be not burnt to them, temples built, altars set vp, holidays kept, and such like.

*Theoph.* Therefore it is lawfull to haue any images, so as it be not to adoration and worship, except those that be made to represent God,

*Mat.*

1. Iohn. 5. 21

*Mat.* All religious images bee also to bee excepted, by the precept of our third rule, lest men abuse them to idolatry, being of their owne nature aboue measure prone to that wickednesse. Which thing gaue IOHN occasion that in the end of his Epistle, hee ioyned this admonition. Babes keepe your selues from idols, that is, from images made for religious vse.

*Theoph.* But they may teach the ignorant people, according to the common speech: Images are vnlearned mens bookes.

Gal. 3. 1.

*Mat.* They be indeed the bookes of the vnlearned; For they can teach nothing but vanity and lying: as the Scripture testifieth: and therefore they hold men in ignorance, and make them idiots and vnlearned; which experience it selfe proueth. But the most sure way whereby all the faithfull of what degree soeuer, may be taught, and that with profit, is that which the Lord himselfe hath appointed, that is, the preaching of his word, by the which PAUL saith, that Christ is painted before our eies

*Theoph.* Let vs goe forward: Is there no euill forbidden in the commandement, besides the adoration and worshipping of Images?

*Mat.* Two other besides forbidden, namely

- 1 Worshipping of creatures: and
- 2 Superstition.

*Theoph.* What cause hast thou to say that these two euills be forbidden in this commandement?

*Mat.* Because they be of the same kinde with idolatry: for they tend hereunto, to declare by the outward gesture of the body, the worship which they thinke they giue vnto God. Whereupon it is that these two bee called by the name of idolatry.

*Theoph.* Right. For both the worshippers of the creatures and superstitious persons, haue accustomedly beene called idolaters, as well as the worshippers of idols.

*Mat.* And verily they be ioyned together, by a most neer bond: for idolatry alwaies accompanieth the worshipping of creatures, and bringeth forth sundry superstitions.

Of the adoration of creatures.

*Theoph.* Let vs speake of these two euills: What vnderstandest thou by the adoration of creatures?

*Mat.*

*Mat.* The religious worship which is giuen vnto them.  
*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because adoration belongeth onely vnto God, whereof the Scripture it selfe is a plentifull witness. Whereupon it followeth, that we can bestow neuer so little of it, vpon any creature, whether it bee visible or inuisible, of what condition soeuer, but we doe take from and diminish the worship due to the Creator. Therefore the Angell said vnto Iohn, which had fallen downe at his feete to worship him: See thou doe it not, I am thy fellow seruant, one of thy brethren; worship God. Apo. 19. 10

*Theoph.* But dost thou comprehend vnder that prohibition, the worship and reuerence which is vsually giuen to men that be aliue?

*Mat.* No verily, so long as it be only ciuill; for if there be neuer so little affection mingled tending to religion, it is corrupt, and displeaseth God. For this cause PETER refused the reuerence which CORNELIUS did to him: for the holy apostle perceiued, that the reuerence was not meere-ly ciuill, but had mixed with it some fauoring of Religion. Now if it be vnlawfull to worship Saints, yea the very Angels themselues, how much more vnlawfull is it to worship their images, reliques, the crosse of Christ, the likeness of it, and such like? A. 2. 10. 16.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to superstition: what meanest thou Superstition by this word?

*Mat.* It is called superstition, when any worshippeth God by rites or ceremonies deuised of men. Of this sort are

- 1 To weare a certaine kinde of apparell for Religion sake.
- 2 To hold difference of place in worshipping God.
- 3 To obserue daies and times for that purpose.
- 4 To make a difference of meats.
- 5 To abstaine from marriage: and such other inuen-

tions of men, whereof PAUL thus speaketh, Which things haue indeede a shew of wisdom, in voluntarie religion, and humblenesse of minde, and in not sparing of the bodie; yet they are not any thing worth. Yea rather they are to the contempt of God, and hinder our saluation. Col. 2. 23.

*Theoph.* How are they to the contempt of God?

*Mat.*

Mat. 15, 9.

*Mat.* Because he preferreth obedience before sacrifice, and will bee worshipped not after the inuentions of men, but according to his owne will, which he hath therefore made known vnto vs. Therefore Christ said to the Scribes and Pharises, They worship mee in vaine, teaching doctrines that bee the commandements of men. Moreover, superstitions bring in the contempt of Gods commandements, and of that worship which he requireth of vs to performe vnto him, which experience doth plentifully proue.

*Theoph.* But how do superstitions hinder our saluation?

1. Tim. 4.

*Mat.* Because superstitions persous imagine, that they merit somewhat by them; which imagination turneth men from Christ, and therefore from their owne saluation. For that cause PAUL calleth the forbidding of meates & of marriage, the doctrine of diuels. It is therefore a great deale better to goe on slowly in the waies of the Lord, than to runne a pace in the waies of superstition: which whosoeuer hath entred into, the further he goeth forward the further he goeth from God, and therefore from eternall life.

*Theoph.* Now I vnderstand what superstition is.

But, seeing there be three euils by the which the worship of God is defiled, I demand why idolatrie onely is shortly touched in this commandement?

*Mat.* It is according to our second rule, namely, that God when he meaneth to forbid many sinnes of the same kinde, forbiddeth them all vnder the name of one, and that the greatest, such a one as idolatrie is.

*Theoph.* Why thinkest thou idolatrie to be a greater sin, than the worshiping of creatures, or superstition?

Psal. 115, 4.

*Mat.* The reason in my iudgement is most plaine. For although a man be mad already, when he forsaketh God, for some excellent gifts wherewith any creature hath been adorned of God, and worshipeth that creature: yet then he may be said to be sore vexed with madnes & outrage when he worshippeth an idole, made by the industrie of man. Therefore the Scripture describing that vanity, calleth idols the workes of mens hands, and presently after addeth: They haue a mouth and speake not; they haue eyes and see not; they haue eares and heare not; they haue noses



noses and smell not; they haue hands and handle not; they haue feete and walke not; and finally that they be dead: In which words he signifieth, that men bee altogether out of their wits, which worship the worke of mans hands, an image, dumbe, blinde, deafe, that vnderstandeth nothing, and is voide of all the senses, and therfore inferiour to his maker and worshipper: which appeareth euen by this, that neither of them would be like their idol.

*Theoph.* But they that worship images, will not grant thee that thou saist, namely, that they worship the images, much lesse take them for gods. For they say, they be not so voide of reason, but they know, they be either of wood, or stone, or of painting. But rather they affirme boldly, and constantly, that all the worship which they doe, tendeth to the honour of God, or of the Saints, whereof they be images.

*Mat.* What though we should grant them all that they say? were not this extreame madnesse, that they will worship God, by doing the things which hee directly forbidde? Which he also affirmeth to be despight against him? But howsoeuer they deny it, it is so. For when they preferre one idol before another, and for religions sake, take vpon them long pilgrimages to salute such an image, and do mumble their prayers before them, euen as for that purpose they haue many images with them; it is clearer than the light, that they thinke there is in them some diuine power: and therfore they be conuincied that they take those images for gods: wherevpon **E S A Y** most sharply reprocud **Isay 44. 17.** the idolaters of his time, although they euen then sought the same shifts. So is the diuell wont to bewitch all those, that receiue idols for religions sake: for at the beginning indeed, he perswadeth them, that they be receiued that God may be worshipped in them; but by little and little, he blindeth them with their mad Religion, so as at length they both worship them, and put their trust in them. And indeed, (as **AUSTIN** said most truly) no man looking vpon images, can doe them any worship, who is not verily perswaded in his heart that they heare him.

For this cause, the Fathers of the Elibertine Councell, the yeare from the birth of Christ, 430. decreed thus concerning this matter; It is ordained that no pictures bee  
 Cap. 6. &  
 Cap. 31.  
 had

had in Churches, least that which is honoured and worshipped bee painted on the walles; against those which then would haue Images placed in Churches.

*Theoph.* How then came it to passe, that afterward they were receiued into Churches?

*Mat.* It was decreed, after many contentions and iars in the last Councell of Nice, about the yeare 754. when the diuell had before brought in many superstitions into the Church: But it lacked Images all the time, from the coming of Iesus Christ, vntill that Councell.

*Theoph.* Truly I am glad, that in going ouer these things, I haue learned at what time Images were brought into the Church. Now I will returne againe to the order of our speech. Thou saidest, that in former times the old idolaters vsed the same excuses to defend their idolatries, which the idolaters of our times doe vse now: who doe specially complaine of this, that they haue very great wrong done them, when they be compared with those ancients, forasmuch as there is great difference betweene themselues and the other.

*Mat.* If it shall seeme good vnto thee to propound the things wherein they say the difference is, I will cause thee to vnderstand, that whatsoeuer they alledge is most vaine: and moreouer, that the Idolatry of our time, is altogether the same, with that ancient idolatry of the Heathen and Iewes.

*Theoph.* It shall very much please mee to heare that of thee. But they make foure principall points or heads of that difference.

*The causes of the newer idolaters.* 1 First, that those ancients, both Heathen and Iewes, (say they) beleueed their Images to be Gods, which we do not beleuee.

2. Secondly, they worshipped many gods, we onely one.

3. Thirdly, because they worshipped the images of things without sense and reason, or else of most wicked men and women, as Iupiter, Mars, Venus, and many other such like: and those Images (say they) be forbidden in this commandement, but not the Images which we worship, as of Christ, the virgin MARY, and of the Saints that now liue most blessedly in heauen.

4. Fourthly,

4. Fourthly, and last of all, wee giue not that diuine worship to our images, which in former times the idolaters gaue to their Idols and fained gods. Vpon which things they gather, that indeede those ancients are worthily called and esteemed idolaters: but that they haue great iniurie done vnto them, when they bee charged with this fault, from the which they thinke themselues free, vpon the reasons which I haue reckoned vp.

*Mat.* I will answer in order vnto these foure parts.

The answer  
to the excuses  
of the newer  
idolaters.

1. First, they be foully deceiued in this, that they thinke those old idolaters beleeued their idols to be gods: for they changed them according to their pleasure, but they alwaies kept the same gods in their minds.

2. Moreover, there was no god of theirs, which had not many Images: and yet they did not according to that multitude, make to themselues many gods.

3. Finally, they did dayly consecrate new images: yet had they no purpose and intent to make new gods. Wherevpon it is plaine, that they were not so blockish and without sense to beleue, that an idol of stone, or of wood, or of gold, or of siluer, was the very essence of God: but only a similitude or likenesse of God.

It is indeede certaine, that the Prophets sometimes reprooued the Israelites for this, that they said to their Idols: Thou art my God. But this was done for the cause which I spake of before: namely, for that giuing to images the honour due vnto God alone, they esteemed them as God. although they coloured that idolatrie with faire excuses.

*Theoph.* Concerning the first point, thou hast sufficiently satisfied me. Let vs therefore come to the second; namely, that the Heathen had many Gods.

*Mat.* That indeede is true, but they did neuer esteeme them alike: but rather constantly continued in this mind, that there was one chiefe God, to whome all the rest were subiect. For, so is the feeling of one God-head engrauen in the minds of men, that it cannot be pluckt out, albeit it be corrupted by their owne witlesse inuentions, and that more is, by their idolatry, as *P A V L* saith to the Romanes.

Rom. i.

Therefore the other Gods, whome they adored besides that chiefe God, were for this end worshipped, that they might

might be their patrones : which selfe same thing they also do at this day which adore men Saints, and women Saints. For they take them in the stead of their Gods, when they giue that worship to their reliques and images, which is due vnto one highest God.

*Theoph.* Let vs now come to the third point : and it is this; That the prohibition which is contained in this commandement, is vnderstood onely of those Idols, which are the likenesses of fained gods, which the old Ethnicks and Iewes, being Idolaters, did worship; and that it doth not extend to the images of the Saints that be in heauen.

*Mat.* This distinction is most false: for εἰδωλον in Greek is altogether the same that Image is in Latine. But both do signifie the likenesses which are made vpon foolish deuotion. Wherevpon it is, that they who worship them are called εἰδωλάτραι, that is, worshippers of idols or images,

But let vs grant there is that difference or diuersitie betwene these words which they affirme, what will it make for them? Forasmuch as there is so generall a prohibition in this commandement, Thou shalt make to thy selfe no grauen image, neither any likenesse of the things, &c. that it admitteth no exception or restraint. For it doth plainely comprehend euery religious likenesse of all things, as well liuing as without sense, reasonable or vnreasonable, men and women, as well which now liue blessedly in heauen, as of the wicked, which now suffer the torments of their sins in hell. For the difference of the things to which the worship due to God, is giuen, taketh not away the reproch and injury done vnto God.

*Theoph.* Now, what answerest thou to the last point : namely, that they giue not the same worship to their idols, which in times past the ancient Ethnicks gaue to their fained gods.

*Mat.* I answer, that they be altogether alike : which shall plainely appeare, if we do a little more diligently looke in to both, and make a comparison betwene them.

1. The Ethnicks sacrificed to their idols: so also doe the idolaters of our time. For they say Masses (which they hold to be sacrifices) to the honour of Saints, yea, at their Altars,

2. They

A comparing  
of the old &  
new idolaters

2. They offered them gifts, and so also do our idolaters.  
3. They saluted them, they fell downe vpon their knees before them, and finally, made their praers vnto them, Which thing also is diligently obserued and done by the idolaters of our time.

4. They called vpon some for the plague, vpon other some for the safe deliuerance of women, other some for tempests vpon the sea; other some to obtaine raine, and other some for faire weather: so also doe our Idolaters.

5. They apparrelled them, they set vp lights to them, they burnt incense: the same also doe our idolaters.

6. They carried them about in their solempne supplications, they followed them most deuouly, beeing carried vpon mens shoulders, and to this purpose, that they might obtaine their requests. The same also is vsed among our idolaters.

7 They appointed vnto them formes of prayers and worship, they built them Churches, and ordained Priests, of whome their seruice might be done: so also do ours.

8. They sought high places, and places vnresorted to by men, planted with trees, wherein they built the Chapels of their idols. By meanes whereof, wretched men (made drinke with blind deuotion) were so out of their wits, that there was very great resort of people vnto them, no otherwise than as if God himselfe had beene present there. The idolaters of our time haue carefully done all these things to the very selfe-same ende.

9 In each citie and towne was one chosen, to be the patron of the place and the protecting God. The same also doe ours.

10. They swore by their names, and had them continually in their mouth, and alwaies carried about with them their images to worship. The same also do our idolaters. To conclude, at length the names of the Idols were changed, but the same idolatry is still retained.

But wee must diligently marke the craft of Satan in this behalfe. For, to the end hee might restore and bring againe the old idolatry, he hath borrowed the names of the holy Apostles and Marryrs, by whome in former times it was ouerthrowne and drinen away, and by this meane

hath put on another person, that it might not be knowne.

*Theoph.* I haue taken no small pleasure by that which thou hast spoken vpon these foure points. Now, that our speech may ende there where it began, I doe acknowledge that the diuell, which in our age hath brought in againe the ancient idolatry, vpholdeth it by no other arguments, than those wherewith in former times it was defended by him.

*Mat.* It is euen so. For, whereas the Idolaters of our age deuising a worship of God, and images of Saints, pretend and say, that the remembrance of God is the better engrauen in their minds, the selfe-same thing was pretended by those old idolaters.

*Theoph.* It is very likely that men euen from the beginning were by these two reasons moued to idolatry: namely, that both they might worship God better, and deeply fixt the remembrance of him in their minds.

*Mat.* But there is nothing which is more to the dishonour of God, and more putteth him out of the mindes of men, than idolatry.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because there can bee no greater despite done to God, than (contrary to his expresse forbidding) to giue the worship due to him, vnto dumbe and dead Images; which also we may liken to fetters, snares, or gins, wherewith men be held fast vpon the ground, beeing lets and hinderances to their minds, that they looke not vp to heauen, neither come to God with true knowledge, and remembrance of him.

*Theoph.* I desire, if it shall not be troublesome to you, to alleadge three obiections, wherewith Idolaters labour to defend themselues: not that I make any doubt of things so plaine, but to the end I may be able fitly to answer the aduersaries, if at any time I haue occasion.

*Mat.* Thou shalt not trouble me, though thou enlarge this speech: for I am much delighted when any occasion is giuen me, to discover the craft of the diuell; who vnder colour of Religion and worshipping of God, bringeth it to passe, that he himselfe is worshipped of idolaters. Therefore propound those obiections.

*Theoph.*



*The.* The first of them is this, that they giue not to the images the adoration or worship due vnto God: For they say, they giue to images only that worship which they call εὐλαία, and that they doe reserve λατρεία vnto God.

The first objection of the idolaters of our time.

*Mat.* This distinction is nothing else but a matter fained of the Grecks, as it may appeare by the words themselves being Greeke, wherewith they might cloke the vngodlines of the idolatry brought into the church by them. Howbeit by this distinction they meant that they worshipped God, and serued the images. But their deedes declare that the matter is farre otherwise. For if it were their purpose to worship the images with the worship which they say is to be reserved for God, what would they doe more, seeing they fall downe vpon their knees, and most deuoutly salute them whensoever they come in their sight?

The answer to it.

But let vs grant that the idols (as they say) be not worshipped, but serued of them; are they not in expresse words condemned of God by the prohibition of this commandment, when after these words; Thou shalt not bow downe to them, the Lord straightway addeth, Neither shalt thou serue them. Which things being so, it is plaine that this distinction is most frivolous, and that it is onely in words, by the which they would blinde the eyes of the simple, especially seeing it is certaine that the Scripture vseth those words εὐλαία and λατρεία for the selfe same thing, and attributeth both of them vnto God.

Rom. 1.9. and 1. Cor. 10. 14.

*Theoph.* Now I come to their other obiection, which is of the Cherubins and the brasen Serpent, that were made by God his owne commandment: the Cherubins to couer the Arke of the couenant, but the brasen Serpent was set vp in the wilderness, that such as were stung by the biting of the serpents, by the sight thereof might be healed, and deliuered from present death. And from thence they will conclude; that it is lawfull to haue images in Churches.

The second obiection. Exod. 25. 18. Numb. 21. 9.

*Mat.* These examples doe not any thing at all serue their turne. For God himselfe had commanded the Cherubines, as also the brasen Serpent, not indeede to be adored or worshipped, but to represent or signifie some things fit for that time, when the Ceremoniall law was in vse. For the Cherubins were in that holy inner place,

The answer.

2 King. 18. 4.

which is called the holiest of all, out of the sight of all, saue onely of the high Priest, who went into it onely once euery yeare : so as all occasion of abusing them was taken away. Concerning the brazen Serpent, EZECHIAS is specially commended of the holy Ghost, for that hee brake it, because after a sort it was worshipped of the people. Now therefore with what face dare they alledge these examples to uphold their Images, set vp contrary to the expresse commandement of God? seeing especially there is so filthy an abuse of them ynto all kind of idolatry.

*Theoph.* But what did the Cherubins and the brazen serpent signifie?

*Mat.* Every Cherubin had foure wings : with two they couered their face ; whereby was taught, that the Angels themselues bee so stricken with the brightnesse of the Diuine Maiestie, that they cannot endure it, and so be compelled to couer their faces : with the other two wings they couered the mercie-seate which was vpon the Arke, to instruct vs that God is incomprehensible, and therefore ought not to bee represented by any humane likenesse. Touching the brazen Serpent, God signifieth by it, that all they whom the old serpent (namely the diuell, with whose poison, and that indeed deadly, wee are infected through sinne) had bitten, were healed, so as by faith they doe shie vnto Christs death. For the brazen serpent was a figure of Christ, as the Lord himselfe teacheth in these words ; As MOSES lifted vp the Serpent in the wilderness, so must the Sonne of man be lifted vp, that whosoeuer belecueth in him, should not perish, but haue life euerlasting.

Iohn 3. 14

The third objection.

*Theoph.* I am satisfied for the second obiection: the third is behinde, wherein they alledge almost innumerable myracles, which were wrought in fauour of the worshippers of idols, and for the punishment of such as despise them.

The answer.

*Mat.* Although I might most worthily reiect the greatest part of those myracles as false and fained, yet will I grant this, that they may be all taken for myracles indeed. But what can they build with them? Might not the heathen boast the selfe same thing of their idols? let prophane histories bee read, they will afford infinite examples of those

Valer. Max.  
Lib. 2. Cap. 2.

those things; neither indeed is it maruell. For, the deuill, to the end he might establish his owne false doctrine, would therein follow God.

*Theoph.* How?

*Mat.* As God when he meant to open his truth vnto men, sent forth true Prophets and Apostles to preach it, and furnished them with the power of the Holy Ghost that they might confirme it by sundry miracles: so the deuill the father of lies assaied the same thing, when hee would bring in idolatrie and superstition into the world. For, he raised vp false Prophets and Apostles to preach it, and gaue them the power of working miracles, for the confirmation of it. Hereupon it is that Christ warneth vs, diligently to take heede of false Prophets, who (saith he) shall doe great signes and miracles, so as they shall deceiue (if it were possible) the very elect. Whereunto also may be applied the saying of the Apostle speaking of Antichrist: Whose comming is by the working of Sathan, with all power and signes, and lying wonders.

Mat. 24. 24

1. Thes. 2. 9

*Theoph.* Why doth the Apostle call them lying wonders?

*Mat.* Not so much to note the falshood of them, as to giue vs to vnderstand of the end where it those miracles doe shoot: and that is, to confirme most false and lying doctrine, such as are idolatrie & superstition, which are directly contrary to Gods word, which indeed ought to bee vnto vs instead of a touchstone, whereby to discern true miracles from false; that wee be not deceived by them.

*Theoph.* Thou thinkest therefore that all miracles, which serue to confirme false doctrine, are wrought by the diuell, and are therefore to be refused as lies, and done to deceiue.

*Mat.* I thinke so. And for this cause, doth the Lord warne vs by Moses, if there arise in the midst of vs a Prophet, that sheweth things to come, or sheweth any other signes with purpose to turne vs aside from his worship, that we doe not heare such a Prophet. For the Lord your God (saith he) proueth you, to see whether you loue him with all your heart.

Deut. 13. 2.  
2. 3.

*Theoph.* But how can the diuell haue the power to work miracles, which appertaineth only to God?

*Mat.* The Lord looseth the bridle vnto him, and giueth that

3. Theſſ. 2. 11.

that power, that ſo he may avenge himſelfe, vpon thoſe which deſpiſe and reſuſe his truth; of whom PAUL thus writeth; Therefore will the Lord ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they may beleue lies.

The other  
part of the  
3. commande-  
ment.

*Theoph.* Thou haſt now ſatiſfied me concerning the firſt part of this commandement: and thoſe abuſes haue beene diſcuſſed in it, which are wont to be brought into the worſhip of God, but chiefly the greateſt among them, namely idolatry. It remaineth therefore, that we come to the other part, to the end we may know, what is to be done in the outward ſervice of God, that is framed according to his owne will.

*Mat.* That is, when worſhip is giuen him both agreeable to his nature, and acceptable to his maieltie.

*Theoph.* What is that worſhip or adoration agreeable to the nature of God?

Of ſpirituall  
worſhip,  
John 4. 23.

*Mat.* It is taught of Chriſt himſelfe, ſpeaking of that woman of Samaria, when he ſaith: The houre commeth and now is, when the true worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in ſpirit and truth: For the Father requireth euen ſuch to worſhip him. Now he oppoſeth or ſetteth ſpirituall worſhip which God requireth, againſt carnall worſhip deuſed by men: which, becauſe it is anſwerable to their carnall and corrupt nature, maruellouſly pleaſeth themſelues, but doth moſt highly diſpleaſe God that is a ſpirit. Yet indeed no worſhip but ſpirituall is acceptable vnto him.

*Theoph.* Now it is to be ſcene, wherein that adoration or ſpirituall worſhip ſtandeth.

*Mat.* Sincere praier is the chiefe part of it, whether it be publique or priuate, when our hearts be liſted vp to God with a pure conſcience, all things being taken away that may withdraw or ſtrange our minds from him, as images, candles, and ſuch other inuentions of men, falling downe vpon our knees, our heads vncouered, and hands liſted vp to heauen.

*Theoph.* Are not kneeling, vncouering of the head, and liſting the hands vp to heauen, carnall ceremonies?

*Mat.* No, in no wiſe, For we call them carnall ceremonies, that were deuſed by men, and ſuch as tie our mindes to theſe earthly things: but theſe are both ordained of God

God, and so bring forth farre diuers or vnlike effects. For they call our minds from these earthly & fraile things, and doe lift them vp to true pietie, and spirituall meditation.

*Theoph.* Is there nothing else required to worship God spiritually, besides the things which thou hast reckned vp?

*Mat.* There is somewhat else required: namely, that we doe heare his word, and receiue the Sacraments with humbleness, and reuerence of minde, and with puritie of conscience. Concerning the rest, so as we auoide all superstitious and humane ceremonies, we must vse the liberty which Christ by his death hath purchased for vs.

*Theoph.* What is that Christian liberty?

*Mat.* It is in euery part of it, a spirituall thing, the whole force whereof standeth in the appeasing and quieting of fearfull consciences, that God may bee so much the more earnestly glorified of vs. And indeede it consisteth of foure parts, the first two whereof (although they be the chiefe) doe not make much for that wee haue in hand: they were also handled by vs in the former booke, yea rather they be the argument of it.

*Theoph.* Neuertheless I would haue you declare them in a few words, that so I might call to minde the things that haue beene already spoken of before.

*Mat.* The first is, an effect of our redemption: namely, that Christ hauing by his death redeemed vs from the slavery and tyranny of the duell, hath brought vs into the most happy libertie of his kingdome. For by it we be taken for the sonnes of God, and therefore heires of his kingdome. For this cause Christ said to the Iewes, The seruant abideth not for euer in the house, but the Son abideth for euer. Therefore if the Sonne haue freed you, you shall be free indeed.

The other part hangeth on the former, and it is a fruite of our regeneration, by the which when Christ hath set vs free from the seruitude of sinne, wee are restored into liberty by his Spirit, so as both we haue wil, and ability from the heart to serue God. Therefore the Apostle saith: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

*Theoph.* Declare the other parts of Christian liberty, appertaining to the speech we haue in hand.

*Mat.* Either of them hangerth vpon our redemption. Now the first is this; that Christ by his death hauing put an end to all the ceremonies (which were nothing else but shadowes and figures) he hath deliuered vs from the bondage of them, to the end we might offer vnto him a worship meereley or altogether spirituall.

*Col. 2. 16.*  
*Heb. 10. 1.*

But if we be deliuered from all those ceremonies which were commanded of God; by farre stronger reason are we set free from those, which were iauented by men, which also haue in them plaine superstition.

*Of the vse of  
meats and  
other things.*

The last part standeth herein, that by the death of Christ the lawfull vse of the creatures which we had lost in ADAM through sinne, is again restored and renewed vnto vs.

*Theoph.* How commeth that to passe?

*Tit. 1. 15.*

*Mat.* Men by sinne became the enemies of God, and therefore vnworthy to vse the good things of God: but being reconciled to him by the death of his Sonne, and adopted or taken to be his sonnes, wee may now with liberty of conscience vse all the blessings of the earth, and other creatures which he giueth vs to sustaine our life, to the end we might so much the more earnestly serue and worship him; vntill he translate vs from this life into that eternall inheritance. Hence is that of PAUL: To the pure indeede all things are pure: but to the vncleane and vnbeleueers nothing is pure. By which things it appeareth that Christian libertie doth by no meanes loose the bridle to our carnall desires, but standeth onely in this, to bring peace to troubled consciences, whether they be out of quiet, and full of care about the forgiveness of their sinnes, or else be troubled about the vse of the creatures, and of other indifferent things, so as they may vse them most freely, without any doubt or scruple of conscience.

*Theoph.* But the vse of the creatures and of indifferent things, seemeth not to auile much to the quieting of our conscience; much lesse to the spirituall worship of God, wherevnto notwithstanding you did ascribe it.

*Mat.* It profiteth much vnto both: and indeede first of all, except we doe certainly know that wee may freely vse the creatures of God, our consciences shall neuer haue rest, yea rather they shall wauer, & be tossed to and fro with doubting



doubting, and superstition. Therefore PAUL saith, Blessed is he that condemneth not himselfe in that which hee alloweth, that is to say, which is certainly perswaded with himselfe, what is allowed or disallowed of God. Rom. 14. 23

Concerning the spirituall worship due vnto God, as it is defiled by a superstitious abstaining from the creatures, so by the lawfull vse of them in his feare, & without offence, it is much augmented: yea rather in this part, there is a certaine testimony of the spirituall worship which we desire to giue vnto him, when as wee will not submit our selues to the superstitious commandements of men. Therefore PAUL speaking of this Christian libertie, saith: In the liberty wherewith Christ hath made vs free, continue, or stand you, and be not againe entangled with the yoke of bondage. Gal. 5. 1.

*Theoph.* What meanest thou when thou saiest, wee were to vse the creatures of God in his feare?

*Mat.* That is to say, soberly and reuerently, as it were before him.

*Theoph.* Why madest thou mention of offence?

*Mat.* Because it must specially be taken heed vnto, that by our libertie we giue no offence to the weak. For the doctrine of christian liberty, is not against the rule of charity

*Theoph.* What is an offence?

*Mat.* The word properly signifyeth something laid in the way, vpon the which he that walketh may stumble and fall. In this place by translation, or a borrowed kinde of sense, it is taken for that, by the which we are hindred from receiuing the doctrine of the truth, or else be turned from it, after we haue receiued it. In which sence he is said to offend one which either saith or doth any thing whereby the saluation of his neighbour is hindred. Now that is a most grievous sinne. For Christ saith, Whosoever shall offend one of the little ones that beleue in mee, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his necke, and that he should be drowned in the bottome of the sea. Of offences, Mat. 18. 6.

*Theoph.* May there not be some certaine rule set downe whereby it may be vndoubtedly knowne, in what things and how we are to beware, that we giue not offence to our neighbour?

*Mat.* There is, but that wee may rightly vnderstand it

wee

we must know, that there be two kinds of offences. There is one called an offence taken, which falleth vpon the head of him that taketh it, forasmuch as no occasion was giuen. As for example, if any take offence because his neighbour doth somewhat that is commanded of God; or refuseth to do some euill thing, forbidden of God. For euer as our libertie must be subject vnto charity, so charity, & the righteousness of the Law, required in the second Table, ought to be subject to the puritie of faith. Therefore thou maiest not offend God, to auoid the offence of thy neighbour.

The other kind of offence, is called offence giuen, the fault and condemnation wherof, lighteth vpon him by whom it is giuen. As when one giueth offence to his neighbour, by doing something forbidden of God, or else offendeth the vnlearned and weake, by an vncharitable & vndiscreet vaine of indifferent things.

*Theoph.* What vnderstandest thou by indifferent things?

*Mat.* Those, which of themselves be neither good nor euil; such as it is knowne these be; to eat flesh or fish. Now, I said, that we must not offend the weake, through the vse of them. For the Apostle saith; Destroy thou not him with thy meate, for whom Christ died.

Rom. 14. 15.

And againe, in another place; If meate offend my brother, I wil eat no flesh while the world standeth; that I may not offend my brother.

1. Cor. 8. 13.

*Theo.* But why dost thou mention the weake onely, when thou speakest of an offence giuen in indifferent things?

*Mat.* Because we must abstaine from them, onely for the weakes sake, vntill they haue beene taught and confirmed in the knowledge of Christian liberty; but not for the malicious men, and mockers of Christian liberty; among whom also sometime it is profitable that wee claime and take our liberty: that it may be knowne, what doctrine or Religion we professe.

*Theoph.* The third part of this commaundement is behinde: I would haue thee open that in few words.

*Mat.* It beginneth at these words; I am the Lord, thy God, strong, iealous, &c. He calleth himselfe our God, both to oppose himselfe to idols, as specially to shew, that it is hee alone, to whom wee ought to cleaue; seeing that

that he is our God, that is mercifull and good. He calleth himselfe strong and ieaious, to teach vs, that he both can, & will reuenge so great an iniquity, and indeed with so grievous vengeance, that it shall stretch it selfe to their childre, euen to the third and fourth generation of such as follow the vngodlinesse of their fathers: Euen as also he sheweth his perpetuall mercy and goodnesse, to many generations, vnto them which loue him and keepe his law.

*Theoph.* There be three things in this thy exposition, of which I thinke it fit to aske thee.

First, in what sence God is said to be ieaious: forasmuch as the affection of ieaousie doth not any way agree to his Maiestie.

*Mat.* The Lord giueth himselfe this title, hauing respect to the couenant made with vs. Now this he often compa-<sup>Why God is called Iea-</sup>reth vnto marriage; as well for the vnion which wee haue with him, as for the mutuall fidelitie which wee also haue promised vnto him. Hereof it cometh, that by the Prophet he saith, I will marry thee to my selfe, in faithfulnessse: as if he did say, that as he performed to vs all the duties of a faithfull and true husband, euen so hee required againe by couenant, of vs, loue and chastitie, belonging to marriage. <sup>Hof. 1, 20.</sup> And for this cause he complaineth, & not seldome, by his Prophets, that Isracell committed fornication with idols, & was polluted or defiled with adulterie. <sup>Ier 3. Hof. 2.</sup> When therefore he calleth himselfe ieaious, he doth it, that with one word he may cut off all the vaine excuses, wherewith idolaters seeke to hide themselues. For this he meaneth; that he cannot by any meanes beare it, that vnder any colour, wee should giue the loue & reuerence, due to him, vnto idols: as an husband that religiously & holily loueth his wife, cannot endure it, whatsoeuer she pretendeth, that his wife should bestow the signes of her friendship & loue vpon another. Moreover, by this title he warneth vs, that at the last he will execute no lesse punishment vpon Idolaters; than a ieaious husband vpon his wife, often taken by him in adulterie.

*Theoph.* The other thing commeth to my remembrance, whereof I said I would aske; how it agreeth with the iustice of God to require the punishment of the fathers of fence, of his posteritie.

*Mat.*

*Exc. 18. 10.*

*Mat.* The Lord meaneth not, that the children should be punished for the sinnes of the parents, forasmuch as he saith by the Prophet; That he will not, that the son should beare the iniquity of the Father, or the father beare the iniquity of the sonne. But this visitation is fulfilled, when the Lord taketh from the house of the vngodly his grace, the light of his truth, & the other helps of his saluation. Now then, nothing else can be looked for, but that the children, being forsaken of God, should liue most wickedly, & moue God to take vengeance vpon them. From hence is that preposterous and disordered desire of the children to follow the idolatrous way of their parents: whercupon it commeth, that they excuse their idolatrie by this one pretence, namely, the example of their fathers. But if the Lord doe threaten so great punishment to Idolaters, so much blinded, that they thinke God is rightly worshipped of them: how much more fearefull iudgement ought they to looke for, that bee illuminated with the light of his truth, and notwithstanding defile themselves with idolatrie and superstitions, against their consciences?

*Against the  
Nicodemites.*

*Theoph.* Those men are wont to answer (which also my selfe haue heard from them, more then once) that they acknowledge no sin in that; seeing they lift vp their mindes vnto God, in the midst of those vngodly superstitions: which also they hate with all their hearts.

*Mat.* It is a most vaine excuse, which the diuell hath put into their heads to lull their consciences a sleepe, and so to hold them in his nets.

*Theoph.* But how can they be conuincd of idolatrie? seeing that the outward actions of men should be iudged of, by the inward action of the heart.

*Mat.* That indeede is true, in such thinges as of themselves be good or indifferent, and be made ill by an ill intent: as, if one praied to God, to be praised & well thought of. But concerning actions of their owne nature euill, and expressly forbidden of God, as is outward idolatrie, there is no inward affection of the minde which can make them good, and acquit them from sinne.

*Theoph.* In what place is outward idolatrie forbidden?

*Mat.* In the second commandement; where, by name the

the Lord forbiddeth, that no man bow himselfe to idols; or worship them. Which thing is often repeated in sundry places of the Scripture.

Moreouer, it may be gathered of that which the Lord answered ELIAS, when he noted, & (as it were by outward signes) marked the Israelites, which had not fallen away from his religion. For he saith, I haue referred to my selfe seuen thousand men, which haue not bowed the knee to the image BAAL. In which words he declareth, that all such as worshipped BAAL with the outward gesture, were idolaters, although they might pretend the inward affection of their minde to bee otherwise. Is it not also iust and right, that God should be worshipped of vs in our bodies, as well as in our minds, forasmuch as he is the maker of both?

*Theoph.* Again, they doe alladge for themselves the example of NAAMAN the Syrian; who being lightened with the knowledge of the true God, through that myraculous cure, said vnto the Prophet; Herein the Lord be mercifull to thy seruant, when my Lord shall goe into the house of RIMMON to worship there, & shall leane vpon my hand, & I bow my selfe in the house of RIMMON: In this bowing my selfe in the house of RIMMON, I beseech the Lord to forgiue his seruant in this thing. To whome the Prophet answered: Goe in peace. Of the which words they gather that the Prophet gaue his consent he should do that thing.

*Mat* This example maketh more against them than for them: for that NAAMAN the Syrian, the chiefe captaine of the host of the King of ARAM, and most deare to the King himselfe, when he was first conuerted to the religion of the true God, knew that hee sinned, if hee did but onely apply himselfe (in his seruice, and bowing) to the King, while he worshipped: and he prayeth God to forgiue him that sinne. But these our Nicodemites, which haue so many yeares beene taught the knowledge of God, and of his spirituall worship, and indeede farre more clearly than the Fathers vnder the Law euer were, cannot be brought thus farre, to confesse that they sinne, when euery where of their owne voluntary accord, and without any inforcement of the Kings authoritie that vseth their seruice, they bee partakers of idolatrie and superstitions. Verily, the confession

Rom 11.4

2.Kings.5.

confession of NAAMAN the Syrian shall bee sufficient to condemne them in the day of iudgement : so farre off therefore it is, that by it they can by any meanes defend themselves. Concerning the answer of the Prophet, GOE IN PEACE; he doth not by it allow the sinne of NAAMAN, neither was it his minde to flatter NAAMAN : But when hee saw him, in so little space of time to haue profited so well in the knowledge and feare of God, as that freely he confessed and condemned his owne infirmitie; he encouraged him, and putteth him in hope, that God would strengthen him, and bring that to perfection, which he had begun in him.

For this cause he saith, Goe in peace. But if hee had to doe with the Nicodemites of our age, hee would haue vsed a farre other manner of speech, and haue cried out aloud the same thing which ELIAS (that went before him) did to the Iewes of his time, mingling the worship of idols with the seruice of God; How long doe yee halt betwene two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him : but if Baal be he, goe after him.

2.Keg. 18. 21.

*Theoph.* I am not a little glad, that I haue gotten the meaning of that place. For sometimes I haue bene troubled about the loosing or vntying of that knot. I doe not therefore now thinke, that the Nicodemites haue any excuse, whereby to cleare themselves from the crime of idolatry: seeing it is euident, that this excuse of theirs is nothing worth.

*Mat.* Adde herunto, that there bee against them the examples of Daniel and his fellowes, and of innumerable Martyrs, who rather chose to suffer most cruell death, than neuer so little to make shew that they worshipped idols. Forasmuch therefore as they dare not impute foole-hardiness to these faithfull seruants of God (of whom the Scripture it selfe reporteth honorably) it followeth of necessitie, that they must condemne themselves; beecause they feare men more than God, of which fault there is no doubt but their owne conscience accuseth them. Let them therefore thinke vpon that sentence pronounced by God against the fearefull, (that is, such as knowing the truth, doe for feare dissemble it; whom he ioineth with vnbe-



vnbeleeuers, abominable, murderers, whoe remongers, forcerers, and liars) to whom hee saith; Their part is appointed in the lake which burneth with fire & brimstone: Apoc. 12. 8 which is the second death. Let them, I say, remember that sentence; that (if they haue any care of their saluation) they may preuent the wrath and iudgement of God, by true repentance.

*Theoph.* Let vs now returne to the words of the commandement. Why did he rather say, To them that hate me, than, To them which do not obey me?

*Mat.* That hee might make the vngodlinesse of such as obey him not, especially of those which breake this commandement, the more manifest. For, by that their disobedience, they declare the inward hatred, which they beare towards him. But contrariwise, the godly, by keeping of his commandements, do witnesse their loue and reuerence of him. Whereby it is apparant, how much idolaters and superstitious persons be deceiued, when they thinke to declare their loue toward God, by their phantasticall and braine-sicke religions; seeing God himselfe testifieth, that such deuices bee signes of the greatest hatred against him. And indeede, by these things is ouerthrowen that most false and hurtfull principle of idolaters, wherein they as-  
Of good intentions, firme, that all things which be done with a good intent (that is, with a mind to serue God) are well done.

*Theoph.* But yet it seemeth impossible, that good intents should be ill.

*Mat.* True, if thou meane such intents as may truly be called good.

*Theoph.* Which are they?

*Mat.* Such as are grounded vpon the expresse word of God. For, the other, which be against the word of God, howsoeuer men esteeme them to bee good, yet are they most abominable and displeasing to God. Therefore, the good intents, as they call them, of idolaters, and superstitious persons, are no better than the intents of the Iewes, which put Christ to death; or those, which haue slaine almost innumerable faithfull seruants of Christ, of whom euen Christ himselfe witnesseth, that they thought they Iohn 16. did God seruice.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* Let vs go forward. Why doth God, speaking of punishment, mention onely three or foure generations; & speaking of reward, nameth thousands?

*Mat.* To teach vs, that hee is more inclining to gentlenesse and doing of good, than to seueritie. Notwithstanding, the sentence pronounced of God is not so generall, but that still hee reserueth it in his owne liberty to shew himselfe mercifull when he pleaseth, to the children of the wicked, and to refuse and cast off such of the seede of the faithfull, whome it shall seeme good vnto him. Neuertheless, hee so tempereth it, that his promise and threatening may appeare to be neither vaine nor deceitfull.

*Theoph.* But these things seeme to agree rather to the whole law, than to this commandment alone.

*Ephes. 6. 2*

*Mat.* Right. For the Apostle witnesseth, that the fift commandment is the first with promise; namely, special.

*Theoph.* Wherefore then are they put into this commandment?

*Mat.* Because the breach of the whole Law followeth vpon the breaking of this. For when any man goeth about to set vp another than the true God, he hath already broken the whole Law. For, whatsoever can be performed or done by him, cannot bee esteemed obedience to God; but to the idol which he hath made.

Adde this also, that idolaters are so busied in their superstitions, ioined most neerely with idolatry, and doe so swell with a vaine opinion of merit, that they easily despise and set light by the lawfull keeping of Gods commandments: which, daily experience doth plentifully witness.

### *The third Commandment.*

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vaine. For, the Lord will not hold him guiltlesse that taketh his Name in vaine.

*Theoph.* We haue beene long in the exposition of the second commandment: because the matter it selfe required it. Now wee are come to the third. And first, let vs see how many parts there be of it.

*Mat.* Three, as of the former,

1. In

1. In the first, is forbidden the rash vse of Gods name.
2. In the second, is commanded the sanctifying of it : and this is contained vnder a prohibition.
3. The third, is a threatening pronounced against the breakers of this commandement.

*Theoph.* That the exposition of this commandement may be the easier; I will demand three things.

1. Firſt; in what ſence the name of God is taken, in this place.

2. Secondly, what it is to take the name of God in vaine.

3. Thirdly, how many waies it may be taken in vaine.

*Theoph.* Declare what the name of God ſignifieth.

*Mat.* It is firſt taken for God himſelfe; as it is eaſie to gather out of the words **MOSES** : If thou ſhalt not take heed to doe all the words of this law, which are written in this booke, to feare that glorious and terrible name, **THE LORD THY GOD**, the Lord will make thy plagues wonderfull; Secondly it ſignifieth all thoſe things, which concerne his glory : as his word and workes.

The firſt part of the third commandement is of Gods name, Deut. 28. 58

*Theoph.* But now what is it to take the name of God in vaine ?

*Mat.* To ſpeake of God, or his words, or workes, contemptuously, lightly, and raſhly : this is to prophane and vnhallo w his Maieſtie. For this cauſe he ſaid rather, The Name of the Lord thy God, then My Name. For, this he meant ; that, ſeeing the Lord is our God, we ought to thinke ſo reuerently of his Maieſty; that of vs it ſhould be had in moſt reuerent and inuolable eſtimation.

How the name of God is taken in vaine.

*Theoph.* Now are we to ſee, how many waies the name of God is taken in vaine : which is the third point of the firſt part of this commandement.

*Mat.* It may indeede be taken in vaine, ſundry waies : which notwithstanding I will reduce vnto five.

1. The firſt, which is alſo the moſt grieuous, is blaſphemie, that is, railing, namely, when a man doth not onely ſpeake contemptuously of God, but doth alſo uſe reprochfull words, and ſuch as ſauour of contempt againſt his Maieſty, as they do that renounce God. To whome alſo, we doe ioyn all thoſe, that trample vnder their ſeete the

How many waies it is taken in vaine.

most holy mystery of our saluation wrought by Christ, and doe vsually sweare by his death, bloud, body, and other parts thereof: as, his head and belly; and that, for the most part, of set purpose, and for the nonce; not being stirred or occasioned thereto by anger: albeit indeed, there be no anger, that before God can excuse so horrible blasphemie.

*Theoph.* Such men verily be farre off from giuing those thanks which we owe vnto him, in that he vouchsafed to take vpon him our humane nature; and that, in it (to deliuer vs from euerlasting death) he would be abased to the most shamefull death of the Crosse.

*Mat.* Thou saist true. And therein they shew themselves worse than the very Iewes, of whom he was crucified. For, if they had knowne him, they would not haue crucified the Lord of glory, saith PAUL. Therefore, except they repent, it must needs come to passe, that (to their eternall misery) they shall feele his most iust wrath and iudgement, seeing that of set purpose, they doe so prophane the benefit of our redemption wrought by him.

*Theoph.* Let vs search out another way, whereby the name of God is taken in vaine.

*Mat.* When we abuse the holy Scripture: which is done chiefly three waies.

1. First, when it is prophaned by ridiculous scoffes and mocks, as the manner of drunkards and prophane men is.
2. Secondly, when it is corrupted; that is, wrested otherwise than the true sence is: as hereticks doe.
3. Thirdly, when any abuseth it to enchantments or sorceries, for the healing of men or beasts, and such like.

*Theoph.* But they, which by that meanes heale diseases, (especially those of men) do say there is no sinne in it: seeing they vse good words, whereof there followeth a very good effect, namely, good health for the most part restored to the sicke.

*Mat.* The diuell vseth to assaile men, disguised: that is to say, he changeth himselfe into an Angell of light; to the end he may be the better welcome. For he knoweth, that if he were descried, all would abhorre him. Therefore he can find no better colour, than if he make shew of the word of God: which neuertheles, is both corrupted by him, and wrested

1 Cor. 1. 3

The prophaning of Gods word.

2 Cor. 11. 24

wrested from the true meaning; as he doth with hereticks; or else is turned from the right and lawfull vse (namely, doctrine, reproofe, correction, and instruction) to the healing of bodies, and such other delusions, wherby both it is prophaned, and the name of God taken in vaine. Whereupon it is plaine; that the cures, which sometimes ensue vpon these deceits and iuglings, be not of God (against whom there is that way great sinne committed) but from the diuell.

*Theoph.* Canst thou proue, that those kinds of healings or cures be of the diuell?

*Mat.* Yea indeed, and that most easily. For God vseth onely two waies to the curing of diseases: whereof one is naturall & ordinary; namely, by the helpe of medicines, whereunto he hath put that vertue and force: the other is besides the course of nature, by myracle; which is when God himselfe doth it, by his owne power. But that way of healing, by rehearsing words out of the holy Scriptures, cannot be called ordinary or naturall; forasmuch as the word of God is not giuen to heale bodies, but soules. Neither can it be reckned among the myracles which proceed from the power of God. For the power of God is not tied to the vtering of certaine words, be they neuer so good or excellent: otherwise there were no man, that might not do myracles at his pleasure; which in very deed, is most absurd. For thereupon it should follow, that God declareth his power, not according to his owne will, but according to our pleasure. Therefore no man ought to doubt, but that these kinds of healing be of the diuell, and not of God.

*Theoph.* They object, that it is not likely, that the diuel (the enemy of mankind) should regard and care for the good health of men.

*Mat.* That which treachers and poisoners are wont to doe, (namely, to flatter thee for a time, to the end they may afterward lay hands vpon thee the more easily) the same vseth the diuell. For, if he heale the diseases of cattell, he doth it with no other mind, but to bind the owners of them to himselfe. If he bring any ease to our bodies, he doth it to bring the soule in bondage to himselfe, & (consequently) that, at length he may throw downe body and

soule into hell where he is. Finally, he doth alwayes vsurpe dominion and Lordship ouer them, to whome he maketh shew of seruice for a time.

*Theoph.* It were therefore better for a man to serue himselfe, than to haue such a seruant.

*Mat.* It were so, and indeed, to be holden with sicknesse all the time of our life, rather than to recouer our health by his helpe.

*Theoph.* I will yet demand one thing. Whence hath the diuell this power, that he can heale the diseases of our body?

*Mat.* God permitteth it vnto him by his iust iudgement, as it hath bene already saide; that they might more and more be blinded which fly to the diuell: that so by their owne desert they may perish in their errors.

*Theoph.* The third manner of taking Gods name in vaine is behind.

Gods name  
taken in vaine  
by dissolute-  
nesse of life.

psal. 50. 16

*Mat.* It is, when a man professeth himselfe to know God; but denieth him in his deedes: that is, whose whole life yeeldeth nothing but offences, and stumbling blockes. Of such the Prophet maketh mention: for thus the Lord chideth with them; Why doest thou declare my statutes, and takest my Law in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee. The same also is to be thought of hypocrites; which are farre worse than these. For, in words, and outward deeds, they doe vainely make shew of the feare of God: but their heart is very far off from him. In this number also they may be reputed whose minde wandreth about other matters, while they are praying.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the fourth manner of taking Gods name in vaine.

When we  
speake of  
God without  
consideration.

*Mat.* When this word GOD, or the name of IESVS, is vsed of vs, either rashly, or without cause, as many doe: with whome it is ordinary, that in the way of maruelling or wondring, they often vse these speeches, MY GOD! IESVS!

*Theoph.* But thou shalt hardly perswade these, that they take the name of God in vaine; although it be often vsed of them. For they say; It is better to name God than the Diuell.

*Mat.*



*Mat.* Our nature is so corrupt, and so vsed to sinne, that wee see not any but the greatest: which, indeed if they be weighed by our iudgment, shall be taken for very small. For this cause, God gaue vnto vs his Law: which is as it were a glasse, & a most perfect paterne of holines; that, by comparing our actions with it, we might acknowledg our sins, and studie to amend. But, of these things shall be spoken more at large, when we come to the vse of the Law. Now we are to examine that fourth manner of breaking this Law, by comparing it with the commandement it selfe; *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine.*

What is this, *In vaine*? Doe we then only sinne against Gods name, when we assaile and set vpon it with blasphemies and renouncing of it? No, at no hand; but euen then also, when it is named either contemptuously or rashly. But who is he, that (being in his right mind) seeth not, that it is both contemptuously and rashly vsed in these formes of speech? If one haue been at a feast (which peradventure haue not beene without riot and other sinnes) hee will not feare to vtter these words, according to the custome among vs; O my God, how excessiuely haue we laughed! O my God, how richly and daintily were we entertained!

If any of our seruants disquiet vs, by their vnskilfulnesse or slownesse, straightway he shall heare,

O God, how foolish thou art!

O God, how slow thou art!

If wee finde any place filthy and vncleane, or if we smell any ill sauour, by and by shal the name of God be mingled with these things, in these words;

O God what a filthy place!

O God, what an ill sauour doe I smell!

These examples, most common among our countreymen, were to be remembered; that we might so much the more plainly shew, how common a thing it is with vs, to vse the name of God contemptuously, and vnadvisedly. A certaine Ancient left it written, that if we haue a costly garment, we do then onely put it on, when we go to the company of great personages, and doe most carefully looke into it that it be not spotted: Insomuch that we shun and

avoid all such things as might soile it. But, the most holy name of God (with the excellency and worthynesse wherof, no garment, no nor any creature is indeede to be compared) is so little esteemed of vs, that it is continually mixed with vaine idle speeches, raylings, and filthinesse.

*Theoph.* I doe acknowledge, that the name of God is abused with very great contempt, in the speeches which thou hast reckned vp: but, that sinne is so common, that in very deepe the godly themselves, and such as desire to reforme their liues, be not free from it: For, a man shall finde very few that sinne not in this point.

*Mat.* The cause why I haue handled that sinne the more largely, was, that it may the better be knowne: especially to such as be touched with any feare of God; that by the reuerence, wherewith they honour his name, they may be moued to amendment: which they shall with very small labour attaine, if they giue their mindes vnto it.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the fifth and last way, whereby the name of God is taken in vaine.

*Mat.* That is, when a man sweareth vaine.

*Theoph.* Before I demand how any sweareth by the name of God vaine, I would haue thee declare what an oath is.

*Mat.* It is the calling of God to witnesse, for the confirmation of the vnknowne truth of our speech.

*Theoph.* How many kindes of oathes be there?

*Mat.* Two, For, the one is of things past, the other of things to come; namely when any thing is promised with an oath: which promise, if it be made vnto God, is called a vow.

*Theoph.* Let vs consider how a man sweareth by the name of God, in vaine.

*Mat.* That is, as often as those circumstances, which are required in an oath, are not kept.

*Theoph.* How many are those circumstances?

*Mat.* In an oath concerning things past, there are but three; without which, the oath shall be all together vaine.

1 The first is; that the thing, which wee are ready to sweare, be not onely true; but also that the truth of it bee certainly knowen to vs.

2 Secondly, that it be of some importance, either in respect

Of a vaine  
oath.  
Of an oath.

respect of Gods glory, or the good of our neighbour.

3 The third is, that the truth of that thing, by no other meanes can be brought to light: for, otherwise, the name of God is contemptuously vsed.

But, as an oath respecteth things to come, there be fūe things to be obserued.

1 First, that the thing be of some importance.

2 That it be iust and lawfull.

3 That it be in our power.

4 That we be ready to performe it.

5 Finally, that when time is, we performe it indeede; Psal. 15. 2  
although it should be to our losse: as we be taught of the Prophet.

*Theoph.* What if all these circumstances be not obserued, is not the name of God taken in vaine?

*Mat.* It is: and herein he is greatly reproched; especially, if that whereof we sweare bee not true. For then hee, that so sweareth, doth put a lie and an vntruth vpon God; and consequently (so much as in him lieth) doth take from him his Godhead, and maketh him like the diuell, who is Ioh. 8. 44  
the father of lies.

*Theoph.* But if we haue taken our oath to do some il thing (as for example, to kill) are we bound to performe that?

*Mat.* At no hand, For, in our Baptisme, we vowed vnto God, that we would serue him, and obey his will. And that oath cutteth off all other contrary to it.

Sinne therefore is committed, in that an vnlawfull oath was taken vainely and rashly, and contrary to the will of God; howbeit, it were far more hainous to keepe this oath. But if we be not bound to doe ill things, albeit we haue expressly promised them; much lesse if they be required of vs, vnder the colour of some generall promise. For secretly they be excepted which are not lawfull; no lesse than those which be impossible, or cannot be done. And therefore Mat. 14. 7

HEROD was not bound to cut of the head of IOHN BAPTIST, by his oath taken to HERODIAS. The second part of the third commandement of sanctifying Gods name,  
*Theoph.* We haue spoken sufficiently of the first part of this cōmandement: let vs come to the other. Now, that pertaineth to the sanctifying of Gods name By what means therefore may the name of God be sanctified or hallowed of vs?

*Mat.* By five; euen the same number with those, whereby it is taken in vaine.

*Theoph.* Declare severally euery of these.

*Mat.* The first is, that we sing his praises, reade his word, and speake reuerently of him.

*Iob. 1. 21.*

2 The other is, that in aduersitie he be praised of vs, both in heart and mouth: as we reade *Iob* did, in these words, LET THE NAME OF GOD BE BLESSED.

3 The third is, that so often as neede shall require, wee doe make a most franke confession of his truth; and leade a life agreeable to that confession.

4 The fourth is, that wee pray vnto him, and from our heart giue him thanks.

5 The fifth, that, when it shall be necessary, we sweare by his name.

*Theoph.* How is the name of God sanctified, when wee sweare by it?

*Mat.* Because, by an oath lawfully taken, hee is acknowledged of vs for the true God; forasmuch as wee confesse him to be the searcher of the heart and secret thoughts, when wee call him to be a witnesse of the things that bee hidden from men.

Secondly, because we flie to him as a most earnest defender of truth; and therefore a most seuerer reuenger of lyers, and such as forswear themselves. And these indeed be the proper offices of God alone.

Finally, by an oath his name is sanctified: seeing that by it, controuersies, which hurt Christian charitie, bee ended, as the Apostle speaketh.

*Web. 6. 16*

Against Ana-  
baptis, that  
wholly con-  
demne swea-  
ring.

From whence wee may gather, how wonderfull the kindnesse of God is toward vs: who doth so farre abase himselfe, that he will be present at our controuersies, and make an end of them. Therefore there is no cause why we should doubt to sweare by his name, in the place of judgement, or elsewhere; so as all the conditions be kept. For whosoever refuseth to sweare, refuseth to giue glorie vnto God.

*Math. 5. 34*

*Theoph.* But Christ commandeth that we sweare not at all, neither by the heauen, nor by the earth; and that our communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: affirming further that

that what soeuer is more, is of euil, which also is confirmed Deut. 7. 12. 1  
by Saint IAMES.

*Mat.* That indeed is true. But Christ in the same Chapter, plainly saith, That he came not to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill them. Therefore his purpose is not to condemne the right vse of an oath, expressly commanded of God in these words of MOSES; Thou shalt feare the Lord thy God, and shalt serue him onely, and sweare by his name. Deut. 6. 13.

*Theoph.* With what minde therefore, did Christ utterly forbid swearing?

*Mat.* With a purpose to restore to this commandement the true vnderstanding of it; which had beene much corrupted by the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharises. For they taught it was no sinne, when any sweare in vaine by the creatures (as by heauen and earth); seeing that the name of God was not expressed. But Christ meaneth to shew that although the name of God was suppressed, or not mentioned, yet secretly it was sufficiently expressed in such oaths, and that therefore therein sinne was committed against this commandement. Therefore his purpose is not to forbid the lawfull vse of an oath, but the abuses: as when a man sweareth vainely, by what name or in what manner soeuer it be done.

*Theoph.* It followeth therefore, that it is lawfull to sweare by creatures; so as it be not vainly: forasmuch as the name of God is secretly vnderstood in them.

*Mat.* Yea verily: yet with this condition, that those creatures be auoided in swearing, which haue beene commonly abused to idolatry. For then the name of God is not vnderstood vnder them, but it is euen suppressed that they may haue his roome, the honour being giuen vnto them which belongeth to the maiestie of God alone. But this doe they, which sweare by the name of Saints departed. In which respect the Lord is bitterly angry with them that sweare by other gods, and taketh that kinde of swearing to be an argument of manifest falling away from him. Whereupon hee complaineth of the Israelites in IEREMY, in these words: Thy children haue forsaken mee, & sworne Thus this learned man and some other haue thought of this matter.  
by those which are not gods. And that indeed very iustly: Jer. 5. 7.  
for

for the breaking of the second and third commandment, is a signe of breaking the first.

*Theoph.* How so?

*Mat.* Euen as he worshippeth God with spirituall worship, and sweareth by his name so oft as the Lord shall require, which spiritually hath conceiued and comprehended him in his minde: so, whosoever hath imagined to himselfe a false God, or many gods, doth forthwith shew it by worshipping of idols, whose names he hath in his mouth, when he sweareth. It is therefore truely said, That idols be first in the heart, before they be brought forth either with the hand or mouth.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the third part of the commandement, which is the threatning against such as breake it.

The third  
part of the  
third com-  
mandment.

*Mat.* It is contained in these words; The Lord will not hold him guiltlesse which taketh his name in vaine. Whereby it appeareth, that the transgression of this commandement is accounted a most hainous sinne before God, notwithstanding men make light of it, and that therefore hee will with grieuous punishment, be auenged vpon such as be guilty of it.

*Theoph.* Is there any thing that doth so much aggrauate this sinne?

*Mat.* Yea verily, For there is no commandement, in the breaking wherof there is scene such insolent contempt of God.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because wee are ledde to breake the other commandements, either vpon a false opinion of worshipping God, as when we giue our selues to idolatry and superstition; or for our owne estimation, when wee yeeld our selues to reuenge; or for our pleasure, when wee commit fornication; or for our profit, when wee steale; or for some feare, as when wee tell a lie: but for the breaking of this commandement, we can pretend neither the worshipping of God, nor our profit, nor our pleasure, neither any feare. Therefore the transgression of this commandement, and especially blasphemy, hath no other beginning, but a most manifest contempt of Gods maiestie.

*Theoph.* Some are want to excuse the matter by custome



to cleare themselves of the sinne of the contempt of God.

*Mat.* But I would demand, whence that custome sprung: Did it not come from the very impiety & mad contempt of God, wherewith our mindes were wholly taken vp and possessed before? For it is certaine, when at the first the minde of man is lightned with the least Sun-beame of the feare of God, that that bad custome is presently changed, howsoever it might goe about to defend it selfe by prescription of very long time.

*The fourth Commandement.*

Remember the Sabbath day, to keepe it holy; six daies shalt thou labour, and doe all thy worke, but the seuenth day shall be the Sabbath to the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt doe no manner of worke, thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, thy man-seruant, nor thy maid-seruant, nor thy cattell, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six daies the Lord made the heauen and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seuenth day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

*Theoph.* The fourth commandement of this first Table is behinde: to the exposition whereof, that we may make an easier way, let vs see of how many parts it standeth.

*Mat.* Of foure.

1 The first containeth the summe of the whole commandement in these words; Remember the Sabbath day, to keepe it holy.

2 The second sheweth, which that Sabbath day is, when he saith: Six daies shalt thou labour, and doe all thy worke: but vpon the seuenth day, shall be the Sabbath to the Lord thy God.

3 The third teacheth, how that day is to be kept holy. Thou shalt doe no worke, neither thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-seruant; nor thy maid-seruant, nor thy cattell, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

4 The fourth rendreth a reason, why he appointed the seuenth day, rather than any other day, vnto this rest: For in six daies God made the heauen and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seuenth day; therefore he blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* We must follow these foure parts in order. Declare therefore the meaning of the first.

*Mat.* When the Lord saith; Remember the Sabbath day, hee teacheth vs that this commandment is of very great waight. Which appeareth to be most true, euen by this, that the keeping of the rest of the commandments, dependeth vpon the keeping of this. In respect whereof, the Lord euer where by his Prophets obiection to the Israelites the transgression of this commandment, when he meaneth to signifie the breach of the whole Law. Hee addeth after; that thou sanctifie or hallow it: that is, cease and abstaine from bodily workes, that thou maiest applie thy selfe earnestly to spirituall and heauenly.

*Theoph.* Which callest thou heauenly and spirituall workes?

Why the  
Lord, vnder  
the law, com-  
manded the  
Sabbath.

*Mat.* That we may vnderstand that point, we must know that the Sabbath was commanded of God for two causes, the first whereof was ceremoniall. That ceremonie also is considered in two respects. For by the bodily rest, the Lord meant to warne the people of Israel, to abstaine and rest from their owne workes being carnall and defiled, that they might suffer the holy Ghost to worke in them. This doth he himselfe witnesse in these words: See that you keepe my Sabbath, because it is a signe betweene mee and you, in your generations, that you may know, that it is I the Lord which sanctifie you. Out of which words it is plaine; that that ceremony was a tipe or shadow of our regeneration.

Secondly, that ceremony serued, to sanctifie the euertlasting rest of the kingdome of heauen, which was as it were a part of the former. For that cause the Lord calleth the land of Canaan, rest, because it was a signe or token of eternall life, according to the interpretation of the Apostle to the Hebrewes.

The other end of the bodily rest is this, that wee may wait vpon the Ministerie of the Church: for that is established by God in this commandment. Moreouer, that we may meditate vpon his workes, & diligently applie our selues to the loue of our neighbour, and the instruction of our household and familie. These are the two ends of this bodily rest, the first whereof together with the rest of the ceremonies,

Ceremonies, is taken away by the comming of Christ who is the truth of it. But the other is perpetuall, and to continue for euer. Therefore that rest belongeth vnto vs, and is euery weeke to be kept one day.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other part.

*Mat.* After that the Lord had commanded one day for rest, then he sheweth which day he will haue kept, and that is the seuenth, namely, the last of the weeke. He doth also teach how we should spend the rest of the weeke, namely, in working, that is, in doing our worldly businesse, to the end wee may be the fitter for the rest of the seuenth day, and may the better performe such things as he himselfe hath commanded.

*Theoph.* Which was the seuenth day?

*Mat.* That which we do yet call Saturday. For the Lords day properly, is the first day of the weeke, according to the distinction made by God himselfe. But the seuenth day the Apostles changed, to teach that the ceremony was abrogated, and the Rest they put off to the Lords day, vpon the which Christ by his resurrection had put an end to that ceremony.

*Theoph.* How did Christ by his resurrection, put an end vnto that ceremony?

*Mat.* Because, by the vertue and power thereof, we are spirituallly raised vp, that we may serue God, and mortifie our concupiscences all the dayes of our life: so as, for this purpose, we doe not now stand in need of the obseruations of any day.

*Theoph.* Is not this to obserue dayes, which thou condemnest as a superstitious thing, in the exposition of the former commandements?

*Mat.* To obserue daies and times is nothing else, but to thinke one day or time holier than another, which agreeth not to the hallowing of the Lords day. For we doe not attribute vnto it, greater holinesse than to another. But when the Apostles would take away the ceremony of the seuenth day, they appointed this, which came first in place, to that vse: and as another day had beene as fit, so neither is this lesse fit or conuenient, than any other.

*Theoph.* Declare the third part of the Commandement.

*Mat.*

*Mat.* It teacheth that no worke concerning this life is to be done, vnlesse it be necessary, vpon that day. But it is to be marked, that such workes were then iudged to be faulty & sinfull among the Iewes, because they were contrary to the ceremonie which they were bound to keepe. But now, that ceremony being taken away, they are not forbidden as euill in themselues but because they hinder vs, and withdraw vs from holy exercises and meditations.

*Theoph.* But why is there mention made of the REST of men-seruants, & of maid-seruants, of cattel, & of strangers?

*Mat.* Concerning men-seruants, and maid-seruants, God commandeth this, as well that they might haue some ease from labour, as also that they might attend vpon the ministry of the Church, and so to care for and looke to their own saluation no lesse than their maisters. The REST of beasts God doth therefore mention, because they work not but with the seruice and helpe of seruants. He speaketh also of strangers, because if they be of the same profession with vs, they also are bound to keepe the law of God: if not, yet at least, heede must be taken that they be not an euill example to the rest.

*Theoph.* The fourth part is remaining.

*Mat.* The Lord setteth before vs his owne example, the more earnestly to pricke vs forward to the keeping of that REST. He doth also call to our remembrance the creation of the world, that we might remember of whom we haue our beginning, and the innumerable benefits that we enjoy. The Sabbath day therefore should be vnto vs as it were an image of the creation of the world: and vpon that day ought we to meditate and thinke vpon that creation, least we be guilty of that fault, which God in former times by MOSES vpbraided the Iewes with; Thou hast forgotten that strong God which hath begotten thee, the God which made thee, thou hast not remembered.

Hereupon it is, that by name he reckoneth vp euery of his workes by it selfe: For in sixe daies the Lord made the heauen, and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. But here is mention of the Lords resting, not because he hath cast off the care of his workes: for he continually worketh to preserue his creatures, and to guide them by his prouidence,

Deut. 32.

dence. But this he would teach vs, that he hath ceased from making of the kinds of things. Finally, the blessing and hallowing of the Sabbath day is after added, not because that day is in it selfe holier than others; but for that it is of God appointed for this purpose, that we should rest from our owne workes, and diligently giue our selues to holy workes.

*Theoph.* The Sabbath day therefore is sanctified of God, in that he did appoint it to holy and religious workes; It is also sanctified of vs, when we giue our selues carefully to performe those workes.

*Mat.* It is true.

*Th.* But are not the rest of the daies so hallowed of God, namely, that they be appointed to holy & religious workes?

*Mat.* Yes verily, so farre forth indeed as they be for our businesse. But vpon the Sabbath, all other things are to be set aside, that wee may diligently apply our selues to those workes: and verily men be without excuse, except they do this. For whereas the Lord hath diuided the weeke into seuen daies, he appointed one onely for himselfe, but the other fixe he hath left vnto vs, to looke to our owne matters.

*The second Table of the Law.*

*Theoph.* The foure commandements of the first Table being expounded, order requireth\* that we come to the fixe last. But before we goe to the exposition of each by it selfe, I desire you to make a generall and brieve exposition of them, which may shew how they agree together, as you did when you handled the first Table.

*Mat.* As in the first Table the Lord doth teach true religion, that is, the way whereby we may truly worship him: So in the last he prescribeth a holy policy or gouernement vnto men: that they might keepe peace among themselues, and serue God with one mind. But for the vpholding of that policy, it is necessary that some be superiours, and other some inferiours; and that the superiours bee armed with some authoritie, wherewith they may keepe the subjects within the bounds of their dutie, and prouide that the mightier doe no wrong to men of meane

The summe  
of the last  
Table.

meane qualitie. Now all these things doth the Lord ordaine in the fifth commandement. For by little and little he doth in continuance of time bring vs to all lawfull subiection, beginning with that which is most easie to be borne. Having settled and appointed Magistrates, he doth presently adioiue lawes; by which they ought to gouerne their subiects peaceably, and keepe them in equity and iustice: From whence also every one should seeke the rule of loue, that they may liue with their neighbours, according to the will of God.

And first, because nothing is more necessary for the safegard of humane society: than that the life of man be preferred; In the sixth commandement the Lord forbiddeth murder, and also commandeth that euery one preserve the life of his neighbour, no otherwise than their owne. When he hath taken order for the safegard of mens liues, because men are mortall, in the seuenth commandement, forbidding whoredome, he inioineth marriage to all men that haue not the gift of continency, to the end mankinde may be preserved and increased. And because a family or houthold followeth marriage: to the sustaining whereof riches are required, in the eight commandement he appointeth to euery one proprietie of goods, while hee forbiddeth theft, wherewith quiet possession is disturbed and troubled; and doth also command, that we labour to get riches, both for our owne vse, and to giue to the poore. Afterward, because it cannot be (such is the desire and contentiousnesse of men) that goods can be inioied of vs, but that oftentimes there arise strifes and controuersies; which the Magistrates cannot appease, except they plainly know the truth of the matter; In the ninth commandement the Lord forbiddeth false witnesse-bearing, which is no small hinderance to the ending of controuersies, and doth command that we speake the truth, both before the Magistrate and else where in all kind of matters. Finally, because the Law-giuer is spirituall, he would teach vs that his Law also is spirituall: that is, that it requireth not onely outward obedience, as the lawes made by men doe, but euen the inward affection of the heart. Therefore vnder the name of concupiscence, which he forbiddeth in the last commandement,



dement, he requireth also this, that we obey him with all our heart, so as there be not any thing in vs, be it neuer so little, that is contrary to his will.

*The fifth Commandement of the Law.*

Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy daies may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

*Theoph.* Let vs goe to the particular exposition of each commandement of the last Table. And let vs begin at the first, which is the first. These be the words of it; Honor thy father & thy mother, &c. Of how many parts standeth it?

*Mat.* Of two, the first is a precept; namely, that we honour father and mother: the other is a promise made to the keepers of this commandement, which is, that they shall liue long: wherein secretly is contained a threatening against such as breake it.

*Theoph.* That we may clearly vnderstand the former part, two questions are to be determined of vs. First, whom God comprehendeth vnder the name of parents. And secondly, what is to be vnderstood by the name of Honour. Answer therefore to this question.

*Mat.* Vnder the name of parents they all be comprehended, who by any meanes in respect of their office are bound to doe the duty of parents towards vs, namely, they that ought to haue care for our instruction, health, life, preservation of our goods, credit, and peace. For in these things is contained the duty of parents toward their children. Therefore vnder the name of parents, are to be vnderstood, first

Who be comprehended vnder the name of parents.

1. Guardians and tutors, that be to vs in stead of parents.
2. Magistrates, who also be called fathers of the Countrey.
3. Ministers of the church, and Schoolemasters, which be our spirituall parents.
4. Husbands towards their wiues
5. Masters towards their seruants.

*Theoph.* Wherefore did God comprehend all these aboue mentioned, vnder the name of parents?

*Mat.* Because, such is the naughtiness and pride of mans nature, (for it is swollen with the desire of greatness and

and dignity) but it hardly endureth to be subiected vnto any. For this cause, that superioritie, which by nature is most amiable, and least enuied, is propounded for an example, that our high minds might the more easily bow, and be made acquainted with subiection.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other question. Wherein consisteth the honour which we are commanded to giue to our parents?

What the  
word Honour  
signifieth.

*Mat.* It consisteth in three things.

First, in outward saluation, proceeding from the inward reuerence which we ought to yeeld vnto them; which shall be done, if we acknowledge them to be the ministers of God for our good.

Secondly, in obedience, which we yeeld to their commandments; so as they be not contrary to the will of God: for then, by the rule of PETER, we ought to obey God, rather than men.

Mat. 5. 29

Thirdly, in their pouerty we relieue the with our wealth. And therewithal it is to be obserued, that God doth not onely prescribe a rule to inferiors, whereby they may giue due honour to their superiors, but doth also teach superiors their duty, which they ought to doe to their inferiors.

*Theoph.* What if the superiors faile in their duty, are not the inferiors discharged from the honour due to them?

*Mat.* No not so: for our sinnes are not excused by the sinnes of others. Moreouer, the obedience we giue them is directly referred to God, of whom it is commanded, and not properly to themselves.

*Theoph.* We haue staid long enough vpon the former part of this commandement: let vs therefore come to the other: and that is a promise, the words whereof be these; That thou shalt liue long in the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee. To the explaining whereof, there be fife things whereof I will aske thee.

1. Firft, Why the Lord ioyned a promise to this commandement, rather than to the rest of the commandments of this latter Table?

1. Why he promised long life, rather than any thing els?

2. Whether we receiue benefit by long life, which is subiect to many troubles?

4. What

4. What the land is, whereof mention is made in this place.

5. How is this promise fulfilled? seeing it is certaine; that sometimes obedient children be taken away by vntimely death, and the stubborne and disobedient liue long. Now therefore answer to the first. What is the cause that the Lord ioyned a promise to this commandement?

*Mat.* He teacheth superiours, by his owne example, how they ought to behaue themselves towards their inferiours: namely, to allure them to obedience, rather by gentlelesse and promises, than by severity and punishments.

*Th.* Go forward, & in like sort answer to the second: why is long life promised by God, rather than any thing else?

*Mat.* The promise is very fitly applied to the commandement it selfe; for it teacheth good and obedient children that if they honour the instruments or meane, of this their life (namely, their parents) they shall long enjoy it. But on the contrary side, it threatneth death, to the disobedient; because they be altogether vnworthy to haue the vse of that benefit; the instruments or means whereof they honor not.

*Theop.* The third point followeth. What are we the better for long life, seeing it is subiect to many afflictions?

*Mat.* I grant indeed that this corporall life, if it be separated from the fauour of God, is most miserable and vnhappy: But it is a blessing to the faithfull. For, continuing in it, we serue to his glory: and sometimes hee granteth vs this, that with great peace and quietnesse we enjoy sundry temporall benefits. Moreover, this promise is applied to the common opinion of men. For they account long life for a great blessing.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the fourth point. What is that land, whereof the Lord maketh mention in this place?

*Mat.* In respect of the Israelites, it is to be vnderstood of the land of Canaan; which they had receiued of the Lord, to possesse it; but in respect of vs, it is extended to a great deale further. For whersoever we be in the world, we haue right of dwelling there, from the Lord, whose the earth is.

*Theoph.* The last point is behind. How this promise is fulfilled? seeing it is certaine, that oftentimes obedient and good children die yong, and the disobedient liue long.

*Mat.* That is proued by the examples of *ABESALON*, *CORE*, *DATHAN*, *ABERON*, and of the sonnes of *HELY*. Dayly experience also confirmeth it, of stubborn & disobedient children: for they be for the most part seene, either in prisons, or vpon the gallows. Contrariwise the good & obedient, the most part, haue long life, with great quietnesse and peace. But, if at any time it fall out otherwise, we must remember, that all the promises of God concerning earthly things, be with condition, namely. so farre forth, as he shall know them to be expedient, both for his own glory, & for our saluation. When therefore God doth betimes call his out of this life vnto himselfe, he prouideth far better for the than if he gaue them long life. For, he taketh them from the miseries of this world, and putteth them into the possession of eternall life. On the other side, sometimes he giueth the wicked long life; but so weake and full of misery, that it is more grieuous than death it selfe. For this cause, *MOSES*, repeating the law of God, declareth that promise, in these words: That it may be well with thee in the land which, &c. But if it fall out otherwise, it is for the cause which was at large set forth by vs, when we entreated of afflictions. For in that place we taught, wherefore the Lord will haue the wicked sometimes to liue long and happily in this world, and the godly to suffer all kind of afflictions, Notwithstanding, that saying of *SALOMON* abideth true; Although the Sinner commit euill an hundred times, and God prolongeth his dayes, yet I know that it shall be well with them that feare the Lord.

Deut. 6. 1

Ecc. 8. 12

### The sixth Commandement

Thou shalt not kill.

*Theoph.* Having finished the treatise of the fift commandement, we are to come to the sixt. How many parts be there of it?

*Mat.* Two.

1. First, the forbidding of Murther.
2. The commanding of keeping peace and friendship with our neighbours.

The exposition  
of the first  
part

*Theoph.* How large is the word killing?

*Mat.* It containeth all the degrees and steppes by the  
which

which we come to it: yea, indeed, all those things, where-  
by we are brought and stirred to commit murder, accord-  
ing to the third rule.

*Theoph.* Rehearse those steps or degrees.

*Mat.* They be three. The first whereof is hatred con-  
ceiued in the heart: forasmuch as it is in plaine words for-  
bidden of Moses; *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart.* Leu. 19. 17. 1

*Theoph.* What if our enemy be a wicked man, is it not  
lawfull to hate him?

*Mat.* We may indeed hate his sins; but not his person.  
But we must diligently beware of two extremities, where-  
in we doe sinne on either side.

The first is, that we hate not the person, for his sinne.

The other that we loue not the sin, for the persons sake.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the second degree, by the which  
we come to murder.

*Mat.* It is anger: for it is a declaration of the hatred ly-  
ing in the heart.

*Theoph.* Doe you thinke it altogether vnlawfull to be an-  
gry with any?

*Mat.* I doe not thinke so. For anger is a naturall affecti-  
on: wherein if moderation be kept, it deserueth as much  
praise, as the two extremities deserue dispraise.

*Theoph.* What is that moderation?

*Mat.* When with zeale for the glory of God, or with  
iust sorrow, wee be angry, because iniury is done vnto vs,  
without our desert; and that keeping a meane, and with this  
caution, that wee neither speake nor doe any thing that is  
against the honor of God, christian modesty, and the loue  
of our neighbour. In which sense *Paul* commandeth; *Be* Eph. 4. 26  
*angry, and sinne not.*

*Theoph.* Let vs consider of the two extremities of anger:  
and first let vs speake of that which sinneth, in exceeding.

*Mat.* We doe then fall into it, when we be angry rashly,  
that is, without a lawfull cause: or else when, being mo-  
ued for a iust cause, we doe passe the bonds of moderation,  
of speaking or doing the things that be against the honour  
of God, neighbourly charity, and christian modestie. But  
that falleth out, when we be so possessed with that affecti-  
on

James. I. 20

on, that the judgement is troubled, & reason it selfe is darkned; for then for a time, wee are like vnto mad men that know not what they do. For this cause JAMES saith; The wrath of man performeth not the righteousness of God.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other extremitie. How doe we sinne in the defect or want of anger?

*Mat.* When, perceiuing that God is offended, or our credit hurt without cause, wee are notwithstanding not moued, as our dutie requireth: which would haue vs not to suffer euils; but that according to our callings we should set our selues against them. Hence it was that MOSES was so angry in the wildernes with the Israelites, whom he saw worshipping the golden Calfe with idolatrous worship; JOHN BAPTIST with the Scribes and Pharises, and JACOB with his father in law. LABAN. MOSES indeede, being moued with most iust anger, drew out the sword, because hee was a magistrate. JOHN vsed most sharpe and vehement reprehensions, because he was a minister of Gods word. and had to do with Hypocrites, & men hardened in their sins. JACOB dealeth with moderate & gentle admonitions, because he was a priuate person, and his owne matter was in question.

*Theoph.* The third step, by the which men come to murder is behinde.

Leuit. 19. 26.

*Mat.* It is euery hurt offered to the person of our neighbour: wherevpon also some times ensueth murder it selfe, which fault is indeed most grievous in the sight of God. As appeareth by that which the Lord saith, that he abhorreth the manslayer; and by the penaltie, appointed by him selfe vnto men-killers. For he ordained that not only men, but also the very brute beasts that had staine man, should be put to death. For which cause he forbad his people the eating of blood. For, by that ceremony, he would shew, how much he abhorred the shedding of blood, and consequently murder.

*Theoph.* Is there any speciall cause, which maketh murder to be esteemed so hainous a sinne before God?

*Mat.* There is, & he doth declare it him selfe in the ninth chapter of GENESIS. For, after these words, WHO SO SHEDETH MANS BLOOD, BY MAN HIS BLOOD SHALL BE SHED  
pre,



presently he addeth, *Because in the image of God made hee man.* By which words he teacheth, that his owne Image, which he hath ingrauen in man, is wronged and misused by man-slaughter.

*Theoph.* But whether was that image, or likenesse of God, blotted out in man by originall sinne, as it hath beene said by thee in the second chapter of the former booke?

*Mat.* It was indeed: but not so far, that there be no steps of it at all remaining. For the spirituall gifts (as one of the Ancients saith) giuen of God to men for their saluation, whereby originall sinne taken away; such as bee the true knowledge of his maiestie, and of the worship due vnto him: But the naturall gifts, that is, such as concerne this life, were onely corrupted, as vnderstanding and reason, so far forth as they respect humane things; but they were not altogether taken away, as experience it selfe doth sufficiently witness.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other part of this commandment: and withall let vs consider of the vertues which are commanded in it.

*Mat.* The meaning thereof is this; that wee bee meeke, lowing peace, and concord, gentle, peace-makers, and desirous of reconciliation. Briefly, in this commandment, God requireth foure things of vs: the first two whereof doe shew what is to be auoided; and the latter two, what is to be done of vs, to the fulfilling of it.

*Theoph.* Rehearse the first two.

*Mat.* That we hate no man; much lesse that we hurt either by words or deede. Secondly, that, if we be offended, we follow the counsell of PAUL, that wee auenge not our selues: but suffer the iniury patiently, leauing vengeance vnto God, who claimeth it to himselfe; *Vengeance is mine. I will repay it.* For this cause also, in another place he is called the God of vengeance, or God the auenger.

Rom. 12. 19.  
Psal. 94. 1.

*Theoph.* But, while we beare iniuries patiently, doe we not giue our enemies occasion to be more cruell and fierce vpon vs? according to our manner of speech; that wolues be more fierce vpon such as play the sheepe

*Mat.* It is indeede certaine, that our enemy sometimes waxeth prouder, and more insolent, because of our meek-

Math. 5.39.

nesse: but this is nothing to the matter. For we ought to be ready rather to beare diuers iniuries, than to reuenge that which we haue receiued; and that by the commandement of Christ: *Resist not euill: but who so shall strike thee on thy right cheeke, turne to him the other also.* And this is the true sense of that place. For, the Lord would not haue vs when wee haue receiued one iniurie, to pull another vpon our selues; as the words at the first sight seeme to require. For it were a sinne, not to take heede of an iniurie foreseene, especially when opportunity is offered vs. For, Christ himselfe, & after him PAUL, when they were stricken vpon the cheeke, did not turne the other; but did greatly finde fault and complaine of the iniurie done vnto them. But concerning that Prouerbe, that *The wolues be fierce vpon such as play the sheepe*, it is a very deuice of the diuell, and therefore most false. For, Whosocuer in that behalfe doth imitate sheepe, is safe from the assaults of all wolues, being protected by the crooke or staffe of that chiefe shepheard of our soules. But on the contrary side, whosocuer, reuenging his iniuries, imitateth the wolues, he goeth out of the fold of Christ (into which they onely be admitted, that be indeede sheepe) and offereth himselfe a prey vnto Sathan, of whom PETER saith, He goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom to deuoure.

2. Pet. 5.8.

Why God  
claimes ven-  
geance to  
himselfe.

*Theoph.* Why doth the Lord challenge to himselfe the office of reuenging, and so earnestly forbiddeth vs, that we reuenge not?

*Mat.* It seemeth to be for three causes: the first, because he himselfe is specially offended with the iniury done vnto vs

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because, beeing our chiefe Lord, he ought much more to be reuerenced of vs, than man which is his creature. As often therefore as we despise and breake his commandements: doing iniury vnto any, is not the offence especially done against God?

*Theoph.* Declare another cause.

*Mat.* Because hee doth a great deale better know the greates of the iniury, than doth hee that is iniured: for he pierceth into the hidden & most secret thoughts of men.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* Declare the last cause.

*Mat.* Because hee hath the chiefe power to reuenge injuries, as he shall know to be right and expedient, which we cannot doe. For he sometime increaseth the iniury, which thought to haue reuenged it. But although wee had that power in our selues, the affections that rule vs, would carrie vs beyond the bounds of moderation. For these causes hath the Lord challenged vengeance to himselfe, and promised that he will indeede repaie it; and so he shall free vs from that labour, and those discommodities, which might hurt vs in reuenging: but that hee might take from vs all excuse, hee hath appointed the Magistrate, which in his name should execute vengeance, and hath for this purpose armed him with strength and authority, that with a staied mind he should consider the greatnesse of the offence, to punish it without any troublous passion, and repress the boldnesse of those which haue hurt vs.

*Theoph.* Is it therefore lawfull to flie to the Magistrate, and to pursue the punishment of them which haue hurt vs?

*Mat.* It is lawfull: for, we seeme after a sort to flie to God himselfe, when we craue the helpe of his ministers, so as it be done without any affection of reuenge, hauing this onely in our minds, to helpe forward common peace, while we call those to punishment, of whom it was disturbed and broked.

*Theoph.* What if the Magistrate refuse to helpe, or if wee cannot goe to him, what thinkest thou is then to be done?

*Mat.* The whole matter must be committed to God, which one day will take vengeance, both vpon him that hath done vs the wrong, and also vpon the Magistrate, which in this behalfe hath failed in his durie. And indeede, this is the best way: for if wee our selues will reuenge when wee be able, we shall do farre more hurt to our selues than to our aduersarie. For we shall hurt but the goods, or the body of our enemies: but we shall so hurt our conscience, that we bring our owne soule into extreame hazard of vtter perishing. I omit the discommodities that commonly arise of it, while the Magistrate demandeth an account of the fact. Therefore, the best is to beare injuries patiently; for by that meanes we do not onely turne away  
from

from our selues many inconueniences; and innumerable troubles and dangers, but also the Lord, to whom our moderation & obedience is seene, bestoweth his fauour & all kinde of blessings vpon vs. And yet the reuenge that is deferred, is not taken away: for the Lord will repay it farre more grieuouſly, than if we our selues had assaid to doe it.

*Theoph.* It is therefore monister-like, that men be so desirous of reuenge, and that there be so few, which in this behalfe suffer themselves to obey God.

*Mat.* It is indeed: and thereby it appeareth that we bee the children of ADAM, and heires of sinne, while we doubt not to make our selues equall with God.

*Theoph.* Wherefore?

*Mat.* Because the Lord challengeth reuenge to himselfe alone. But there is nothing that man desireth so feruently: inſomuch, as many times he offereth his one life vnto all dangers, that in this point he may haue his desire. Therefore, they onely that haue put off the olde ADAM, and put on the new, be able to ouercome these euill affections, and to leaue vengeance vnto God.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to those two last things, which the Lord requireth of vs to the fulfilling of this commandement, Declare the first.

*Mat. 5. 23.*

*Mat.* That we should goe to him, with whom wee be at variance, to be reconciled, according to the commandement of Christ: If thou bring thy gift vnto the altar, and ther remembreſt that thy brother hath ought against thee, leaue thy gift ther before the altar, and go thy waies first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come to offer thy gift. Now he teacheth by that ceremonie of the Law, which was then in vse, that all the worship which wee offer vnto God, is displeasing vnto him, so long as we be at variance with our neighbours.

Moreouer, PAUL warneth, that this reconciliation bee soone made, and that it be not put off from day to day. For he saith: Let not the Sunne goe downe vpon your wrath. Which indeed is the most fit remedie to breake off hatred, & to bridle reuenge. For euen as diseases and sores at the first, being easie to be cured, by delay are made incurable, (& that more is) deadly: so hatred will grow past cure, if thou

thou redres it not speedily. For this cause PAVI after these words, Let not the Sunne goe downe vpon your wrath, by and by addeth, Neither giue place to the diuell.

*Theoph.* Wherefore doth he adde these words?

*Mat.* Because hatred, if it be neuer so little a time hidden in our mindes, maketh an entrance for the diuell, who hauing entred vpon our hearts, doth so wholly possesse them, that refusing reconciliation. he stirreth vs vp to the desire of reuenge, till at length he hath throwne vs headlong to destruction.

Seeing therefore he is so hurtfull a guest, there is cause that betimes we shut the doores against him, by vnfaigned reconciliation to our brother.

*Theoph.* There is yet remaining another point concerning those things which we are bound to doe for the fulfilling of this commandement.

*Mat.* This it is. After we haue diligently done our dury, if our aduersarie doe obstinately refuse reconciliation, we leaue not off to loue him, to pray vnto God for him, and in all things to pleasure him, according to the commandement of Christ; Loue your enemies, blesse those that curse you, doe good vnto them that hate you, and pray for them that hurt you & persecute you, that you may be the children of your father that is in heauen. Hither also may be referred the exhortation of PAVI; If thine enemy hunger, Mat. 5 44. giue him meate. if he thirst, giue him drinke. For if thou doe this, thou shalt heape coales of fire vpon his head. Rom. 12. 20.

Finally, that also is to be marked, which PAVI presently addeth; Be not overcome of that which is euill, but overcome euill with good.

*The seventh Commandement.*

Thou shalt not commit adulterie.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the seventh commandement of the Law. How many parts be there of it?

*Mat.* Two. In the first he forbiddeth adulterie, in the last he commandeth chastitie.

*Theoph.* What doth the Lord vnderstand by the name of adulterie?

*Mat.* Not onely the company of man with woman out of

The exposition  
of the first  
part.

of marriage, but also all kinde of filthynesse, by the which man may be defiled. Moreouer, all the affections of concupiscence; and finally whatsoever stirreth vp vnto lust, & nourisheth it. Of which sort are

Vnlawfull touchings.

Wanton apparelling of the body.

Filthy speech.

Vncleane songs.

Filthy reading.

Too familiar company with those, who it is very like be led with lust.

Wanton lookes,

Idleness, that is the mother of all vices, and namely of whoredome.

Dancings, which are most manifest stirrers, and prouokers of lust.

Seeing therefore it is certaine (according to the sayings; He that loueth danger shall perish in it) that we are by nature prone vnto lust; except we diligently take heede of all those prouocations, it will verily come to passe, that at length we shall be driuen to the very act it selfe: which sin notwithstanding is before God esteemed most hainous, especially in those that professe the name of Christ.

*Theoph.* Why so?

1. Cor. 6. 15.

*Mat.* Paul giueth a reason in these words: Doe you not know that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Know you not, that he which is coupled with an harlot, is one body with the harlot? For he saith, they which were two shal be one flesh. But he which is ioyned to the Lord, is one spirit. He fornication; every sinne that a man doth is without the body: but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his owne body.

But if the iniury be great that is done vnto Christ, verily that must not be thought little that is done to our neighbour. For there followeth vpon this the staine of honest families. Moreouer, maidens, otherwise to haue beene well bestowed, are thus not seldome brought to a hainous offence, to their dishonour and punishment. But the iniury shall



shall be greatest, if adultery be committed, that is, if either the man or the woman, or both of them be married. For so the faith of marriage is stained, and the bond broken: the whole family is ouerthrowne, and sometimes bastards be suborned for lawfull children, vnto whom the inheritance commeth. For this cause the Lord ordained the Law that the adulterer should die the death. Leuit. 20, 10  
Deut. 22, 22

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other part of this commandement. Is there any other thing to be obserued in it, besides the chastity which we ought to keepe?

*Mat.* There is. Namely, that God commandeth marriage to al those, that are not euen inwardly endued with the gift of continency. For as PAUL saith, It is better to marry than to burne. The exposition of the second part, 1. Cor. 7, 9

*Theoph.* Seeing you haue made mention of marriage, I would haue you shew the causes why it was ordained.

*Mat.* They be three.

1. First, procreating of children.
2. Mutuall helpe one of another.
3. The auoiding of fornication.

*Theoph.* Which is the chiefeest of these causes?

*Mat.* The first in respect of God, namely the increase of mankind: but in respect of vs, the last; namely the auoiding of fornication.

*Theoph.* Why saiest thou, that this is the chiefe in respect of vs?

*Mat.* Because it layeth vpon vs a necessitie of marrying, which the other two do not. For this cause PAUL saith; For the auoiding of fornication, let euery man haue his own wife, & let euery woman haue her own husband. Howbeit if helpeaketh to those that haue not the gift of continency, whom he expressly commandeth in those words to marry. Notwithstanding, heed must be taken, that we defile not so holy an ordinance, by dissolute wantonnes. Of the which thing we are warned by the Apostle, when he saith, Marriage is honourable amongst al, and the bed vndefiled.

*Theoph.* What noteth he in this testimony?

*Mat.* We are by it admonished, that although the Lord hath ordained marriage to be a remedy against our infirmitie, it may not therefore be abused to vnbridled pleasures,

tures, forasmuch as the chastity of marriage forbiddeth it. For if the honesty of marriage do hide the filthinesse of incontinency, it must not therefore be continually a stirring vp or prouoking of it. Wherefore such as be martied may not think all things lawfull for them according to the lust of the flesh; but let them carry themselves modestly one towarde another in the feare of the Lord, so dealing, that they do not any thing at all vnbecoming the honesty and temperance of marriage: Wherefore also *Paul* warneth vs saying: Let every of you know to possesse his vessell with holinesse and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles which knew not God.

1. Thess. 4 4.

### The eight Commandement.

Thou shalt not steale,

*Theoph.* How many parts be there of this eight commandement?

*Mat.* Two. The first, the forbidding of theft: the other a commandement contrary to the prohibition, namely, that we labour to defend and help forward the profits and commodities of our neighbour, euen as our owne; and to helpe the necessities of others.

*Theoph.* VVhat doth the Lord comprehend vnder the name of theft?

*Mat.* All cuill trades and deceits, by the which we hunt after other mens goods, & seeke to get them to our selues: which is vsually done fve waies.

1. First, by sacriledge, when a man taketh to himselfe the goods dedicated to God.

2. Secondly, by robbery, when any getteth to himselfe any thing of another mans, by open or secret force.

3. Thirdly, by fraud, or legerdemaine, when any selleth counterfeit wares for good: or by prating exacteth a greater price, or else deceiueth by a false measure or waight.

4. Fourthly, by vsury, when any for lending money requireth gaines more than the lawes allow, which indeede hurteth both lender and borrower, the former in his soule, the other in his goods.

*Theoph.* Thou dost not therefore condemne that gaine which is taken according to the order of law?

*Mat.*

*Mat.* I condemne it not.

*Theoph.* But how agreeth it with the saying of Christ, Luk. 6. 34  
Lend, looking for nothing againe?

*Mat.* It is to be vnderstood, of the poore, to whom if we be commanded to giue, much more to lend, looking for nothing. But when we lend to the rich, which be able to restore, and that with increase, which also for the most part are wont to borrow to make gaine by it; I see not what letteth but that we may follow the law of the Magistrate, so as it be not against the rule of charitie. For hee that borroweth, maketh more gaine of it, if he be thriftie, than doth he that lendeth it.

*Theoph.* There must therefore respect be had of him that borroweth; it must be also inquired, why he doth it, and whether he be thrifty or a riotous spender.

*Mat.* I thinke so: for if it be likely that he will wastfully spend that he borroweth, it ought not to be lent.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the fifth meane, by the which a man doth vniustly conuey to himselfe another mans goods.

*Mat.* It consisteth in a more hidden kinde of deceiuing, namely, when any vnder colour of law stealeth other mens goods: which they doe that peruert the law. But vnder these kinds bee comprehended the fauourers of theft, the receiuers, and they which by any meanes giue their consent vnto theft.

*Theoph.* Is nothing els contained vnder this prohibition?

*Mat.* Yes verily, namely, whatsoever may be a prouocation to theft.

*Theoph.* Rehearse them all.

*Mat.* First of all, couetousnesse, that is, desire of riches: 1. Tim. 6. 33. which the Apostle affirmeth to bee the roote of all euils, because there is no wickednesse, be it neuer so hainous, whereunto men are not driuen and brought by that wicked desire.

Secondly, prodigality, because when a man hath wastfully spent his owne goods, he is stirred and moued to get the goods of other men, by vnlawfull meanes.

Last of all, idlenesse, for by it men be brought to pauer- Eph. 4. 28.  
ty, by meanes whereof they fall to theft. For this cause Paul warneth; Let him that stole, steale no more: But let him rather

father workewith his hands the thing that is good, that he may giue to him that needeth.

*Theoph.* Now are wee come to the other part of this commandment. What is contained in it?

*Mat.* First, that to our power we presentie the goods of our neighbour, which in the Scripture is called iudgement, where in many places it admonisheth vs to doe iustice and iudgement. For by the name of iustice he vnderstandeth this, that we giue vnto euery one his right, and by iudgement, that we giue no consent to any iniury done to our neighbour, but that we put it away so farre forth as in vs lieth.

Secondly, we be commanded to deale with our neighbours according to charity, seeing God hath giuen vs goods, to be stewards of them, to vse them our selues, so farre forth as necessity requireth, and to helpe the poore & needy. But whosoever keepeth not this rule, he conuertieth to himselfe other mens goods.

*Theoph.* Dost thou thinke therefore, that they which helpe not the poore and needy, be before God accounted guilty of the sinne of theft?

*Mat.* Yeauerily. And indeede, a farre greater theft, than if a Baylife of husbandry, should refuse to pay his Lord the fruits of his farme. For whatsoever goods wee haue, be the Lords, and he hath giuen them vnto vs vpon this condition, that we should pay a yearly rent, the gatherers and receiuers whereof he hath appointed the poore. Whosoever therefore refuseth, or draweth backe to helpe the poore, are guilty before God, not onely of theft, but also sacriledge: and therefore bee altogether vnworthy, whom he may depriue of all good things, seeing they doe not according to their duty acknowledge him from whom they haue them all.

*Theoph.* There is therefore a great number of robbers of God.

*Mat.* A very great number indeed. For a man shall finde very few which in this behalfe doe their duty. But this ariseth vpon a false opinion, wherewith rich men deceiue themselves: namely, because they imagine that all the goods they haue, whether they came by inheritance, or  
were

were otherwise gotten, be so their owne, that they be wholly and altogether left to their owne will. And therefore that they be not bound to helpe such as neede, if they list not. Moreouer, couetousnesse is ioyned to this vaine imagination, which so shutteth vp in them the bowels of mercy, that they become vtterly vnmercifull. And that for the most part falleth out with them that are most wealthy. For euen as couetousnes most commonly springeth from plenty and abundance: so it is farr more fitly nourished and strengthened by it than by poverty.

*Theoph.* There want not some which thinke, that these two words, *MINE & THINE*, breed al the stirres wherewith the world in this part of it, is troubled at this day, and doe affirme, that things would bee best ordered, if there were such communitie of goods, as they dreame was vsed among the Christians a litle after the death of Christ.

*Mat.* Whosoeuer goe about to defend that community, they thinke themselues to bee wiser than God himselte, which is the author of the propriety of goods. This indeed is true, that the most part of men do abuse it; whereupon doerise the innumerable confusions, which euery man seeth in the world. But when we vse it as it is meete, and according to the meaning of this Commandement; it brings forth fruits most conuenient for the furthering of Christian charity, and the preseruatiō of humane sociery.

*Theoph.* Now describe me those that abuse the propriety of goods, against the meaning of this commandement.

*Mat.* They be of three kindes. In the first place, they are to be put, which say; Whatsoeuer is mine, is mine: but whatsoeuer is thine, is mine. That is, mine owne is not sufficient for me, but I doe also gape for thine. And in this number they are all to bereckoned, that by any ill meanes get the goods of other men themselues.

In the second place we will set them that say; That that is mine, is mine; but that which is thine, is thine. That is, I will not conueigh thy goods to my selfe, neither also will I giue thee any part of mine. And these kind of men refrain indeed from taking away that which is anothers, but they cannot abide to pleasure, or freely to doe good to any.

In the last ranke we will place them which say; That

K

that

that is mine is thine, and that which is thine is mine. That is; I am ready to giue thee part of that I haue, but with this condition, that thou also wilt pleasure mee with that which thou hast.

The first of all these therefore be further off from charity than the second, and the second further than the last, who (as it is manifest) come somewhat nearer to it.

*Theoph.* I see not wherein the last doe offend.

*Mat.* In that they giue no part of their goods, but to those, of whome they looke to receiue the like, and therefore obey not Christ, giuing them good counsell: When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, neither thy brethren, nor thy kinsfolkes, nor thy rich neighbour: least they also bid thee againe, and thou be recompenced. But when thou makest a feast, call the poore, the maimed, the lame, and the blind and thou shalt be blessed, because they cannot recompence thee, for thou shalt be recompenced at the resurrection of the iust. And yet Christ doth not altogether forbid rich men to feast among themselves, or to pleasure one another, so as they haue regard of the poore, as it is meete.

Luke 14. 13

*Theoph.* How then may these words, Mine, & Thine, be lawfully vsed?

*Mat.* The contrary altogether must be said vnto that, that is said of those first: namely, That which is mine is thine: but that which is thine is thine owne. That is, I am ready to make thee partaker of that I haue, although thou art not able to doe the like for me.

*Theoph.* But if they, to whom wee communicate our goods, haue such wealth as they be able to restore them vnto vs, is it not lawfull to require them againe?

*Mat.* It is lawfull; so as at the first, we shew that it is our meaning. For it is vnlawfull to demand that againe which was giuen. Therefore alwaies with that caution wee must require our goods againe: which wee may keepe for the poore, who by their owne labor are not able to helpe their necessitie. For they that be able by labor to sustaine their life, and in the meane time become poore by idlenesse and sloth, be altogether vnworthy to be relieved: for the Apostle commandeth. If any will not worke, let him not eate.

*Theoph.*



*Theop.* But how much are we bound to giue to the poore?

*Mat.* So much as their necessity requireth. For: I O H N Luke 3.12  
BAPTIST goeth so far, that he teacheth; He that hath twob  
coats, let him giue to him that hath none. In the which  
sense, that community of goods, whereof thou spakest before,  
is to be taken: Namely, that none of the faithfull thought  
any thing that he had to be his own; but did most liberally Acts 4.34  
make all things common, so farre forth as the necessity of  
the Church required it. For they sold fields and houses,  
that they might helpe the poore. This is the true meaning  
of that place: but we must not imagine any confusion of  
goods, as if the faithfull had liued in confusion. For al-  
though I should not say, that they could not then do it, the  
words of PETER to ANANIAS be against it; If so be thou  
hadst kept it, did not thy field remaine to thy selfe? and af-  
ter it was sold, was it not in thine owne power?

*Theoph.* I confesse that the community of goods is so to  
be taken. Howbeit, since that time charity hath beene very  
cold in the Church: for now there be none that sell fields,  
or houses, to giue to the poore.

*Mat.* Ye rather they be most few, that distribute any  
thing to the poore, of their yearely rents and superfluities.  
Howbeit the cause that is wont to stay vs from liberality  
(namely, the feare of pouerty and desire to increase our  
wealth) ought specially to kindle vs vnto it, if wee be-  
leeued the promises of God, by the which we are admo-  
nished, that they shall neuer come to pouertie, that haue  
relieued the necessity of the poore; but that such as haue  
turned their eyes from them shall be full of curses. There-  
fore he that with his plenty helpeth the poore, lendeth  
money vnto God, who without doubt will pay it againe, Prov. 19.17  
Nay rather Christ addeth; Who so shall giue a cup of cold  
water to any of these in the name of a disciple, shall not Math. 10.41  
lose his reward. So that, of the things that wee possesse,  
nothing may worthily be accounted our owne, but that  
which we giue to the poore: for, all the rest is scarce safe,  
at leastwise by death we shall be taken away from the en-  
ioying of them. Those that of charity be bestowed vpon  
the poore, are by their hands sent vp into heauen, shall  
there be diligently kept of God, and at the last day shall be

restored, and that with increase, for so he hath promised.

*Theoph.* God therefore yeeldeth much of his owne right when hee promiseth to restore vs, and that with increase, the things that haue beene giuen vnto the poore, seeing we can giue nothing, but of his owne.

*Mat.* Thou iudgeth rightly: but this he doth to stirre vs vp to belecue and desire of charity, whom hee seeth to be very slacke and cold in it.

*Theoph.* What letteth, but that the Lord should giue riches vnto all? especially to the faithfull, whom he loueth and hath care of, so as one of vs might well be without the helpe of another.

*Mat.* The Lord will exercise the charity of the rich, and the faith and patience of the poore. Now by that inequality of goods, he preferueth the society of mankind, which indeed could not stand, if all men were alike in wealth and honour.

### *The ninth Commandement.*

Thou shalt not beare false witnesse against thy neighbour.

*Theoph.* Let vs goe on to the ninth Commandement; how many parts be there of it?

The exposition  
of the first  
part,

*Mat.* Two, as of the former three: for false witnesse is forbidden, and true witnesse is commanded.

*Theo.* What doth God vnderstand by the name of false witnesse?

*Mat.* All the things wherewith we may hurt our neighbour with the tongue: Howbeit this kind is set downe for an example, according to our first rule, because wee doe most of all hurt our neighbour by false witnesse.

*Theo.* I would haue you reckon vp all the seuerall kinds, that be contained vnder this Commandement.

*Mat.* We will therefore diuide them into two sorts. The one, of false witnesse that is borne in iudgement: The other, that is out of iudgement, concerning the things that we haue to doe with, in dealing with men. Touching false witnesse in iudgement, because an oath commeth between, and the matter either concerneth the life or goods of our neighbour, that wickednesse cannot be committed, but  
three

three abominations come foorth at one time together namely false witness, periurie, theft, or murder. For this cause God appointed the same punishment to the false witness, which he, againit whom he witnessed had deserved, if he had been truly accused. Notwithstanding wee must know, that there be two kinds of false testimonies in iudgement, The one altogether false, such as was that wherewith NABOTH was accused, that he had blasphemed God and the King. The other false onely in part, and it is called a cauill or craftie accusation, when something is either taken from the truth, or put to it, or changed, as they did that testified against Christ, affirming that he said; I can destroy the temple of God, and build it againe in three daies; when notwithstanding his words were these: Destroy this temple, and in three daies I will raise it vp againe.

Deut. 19. 19

1. Re. 22. 13.

Math. 26. 6.

Iohn 2. 19.

Of false wit-

nesse, out of

iudgements.

*Theoph.* Now we are come to those false testimonies, that are out of the place of iudgement.

*Mat.* There be diuers kinds of them, but wee will bring them to three. And they be these;

- 1 Backbiting or slandering.
- 2 Flatterie,
- 3 Lying.

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore in the first place, speake of backbiting. What is backbiting or slander?

*Mat.* When a man dispraierh, or mocketh his neighbour being absent, and so impaireth his name and credit. Which is a most grievous offence; for a slanderer hurteth three at once.

- 1 Himselfe.
- 2 The hearer: for he is guiltie of receiuing the slander which God hath expressly forbidden.
- 3 Him that is mocked or slandered. Howbeit the slander least of all hurteth him: for his name only is hurt; but the conscience of both the former is hurt, by a sinne committed against God and their neighbour.

In this ranke are to be placed whisperers, or secret carrie-tales, who indeed do much aggrauate the sin they haue committed in receiuing the slander, vhen as whispering or muttering it, they giue occasion of many euils, and especially, if it be amplified and enlarged of them, which most

Prov. 6. 16.

or 17.

1. Cor. 13. 5

or 17.

commonly falleth out. For this cause SALOMON saith; Sixe things the Lord hateth, but his soule abhorreth the seventh, namely him that soweth dissension among brethren. Vnder this kinde be all those things contuned, that minister occasion of euill speech, namely, an euill or false suspicion of our neighbour, without an euident and just cause giuen; for it is against christian charity, which, PAUL saith, is not suspicious.

Also a rash iudgement of our neighbor, which is expressly forbidden by Christ.

*Theoph.* What if he, that dispraiseth or reporteth ill of his neighbour, speake the truth, may that be called backbiting or slandering?

*Mat.* It ought: for he sinneth in a double respect. First, his minde is estranged from the affection of christian charity, yea rather he is mooued to that wickednesse, by a desire of speaking euill, or else, that he may get himselfe praise by the dispraise of another. Which thing indeed appeareth euen by this, that such backbiters passe ouer all the vertues of their neighbour, but their faults they reckon vp, and not seldome enlarge them.

Secondly, he objecteth those things against his neighbor, not with a mind to amend him, neither doth he make report to them vnto such to whom it appertaineth to admonish him; but he muttereth and whispereth it to him, that cannot apply any remedie to the fault: yea rather he hath an ill opinion of his neighbour; which doth not a little hinder Christian charity.

Flatterie,

*Theoph.* Let vs come to flattery, which thou saidst was the second kinde of false witness bearing, that is out of iudgement.

*Mat.* This vice is not so huiuous as the former, for it is not so farre off from christian charity. Moreouer, the flatterer hurteth only two, namely himselfe, and him whom he flattereth. But the backbiter, as was said, hurteth three at once. Howbeit this sin is condemned of the Lord: for the flatterer fostereth the sins of him whom he smoochly flattereth, and doubteth not to colour or paint them ouer with the name of vertue. For this cause the Prophet saith, Woe vnto them that call euill good, and good euill.

Ier. 5. 10.

*Theoph*

*Theoph.* There is behinde, the third kinde of false witness out of iudgement, namely lying.

*Mat.* There be diuers kinds of this sinne: for some lies Lying three kinde of it: proceede from couetousnes, and they be the most hainous, because they most hurt our neighbour. Others be of infirmity and feare, such as was the lie of ABRAHAM, saying that SARAH was his sister. Others be of lightnesse for pleasures sake, which notwithstanding be sins: for Christ saith, that whatsoeuer idle word men shall speake, they shall giue account of it in the day of iudgement. Gen. 12. 13. and 30. 1. Math. 12. 36.

There be some other lies vnder the colour of loue, and are called officious lies, when a man by them thinketh to doe his neighbour good. Because he so deliuereth him either from imminent danger, or from losse, or reproch; or else when any lieth for his owne profit, that he may turne such discommodities from himselfe. These bee the chiefe kinde of lies, vnder the which also counterfeting and dissimulation is comprehended; when a man faimeth that, that is not; as also cloaking and disguising, when a man hideth that that is indeede, to the end, the contrary may appeare or seeme to be.

*Theoph.* Whether thinke you all kinde of lies to be sinfull and euill?

*Mat.* I thinke they be. For the Scripture condemneth all lying, and warneth vs to be true in all things.

*Theo.* Is it not therefore lawfull sometimes to hide the truth

*Mat.* It is not only lawfull, but also many times expedient, in respect both of the common and priuate profit of our neighbours: Yet with this condition, that wee be not bound by oath before the Magistrate to declare it. For otherwise, it should not bee lawfull for vs to conceale the truth, except the question were of the peace of the church, or the safety of our brethren, or Christian charitie requireth, that we should suffer any thing, rather than bring danger to any brother, much more to the whole church.

As for example, if a man were held prisoner of enemies, he ought rather to suffer all kinds of torments, than to declare any thing that might be to the hurt of his countrey, or of his neighbour.

*Theoph.* The conclusion is, that thou thinkest it lawfull.

yea sometimes expedient, to conceale the truth; but that it is not lawfull to lie vpon an occasion, no not for our owne safety, or the safety of our neighbour.

*Mat.* I thinke so. For the glory of God, who abhorreth lies, ought to be referred before our owne life, and the loue of our neighbour. Moreouer, the rule of charity requireth it not, that we should by a lie, hide the sinne of our neighbour, which by the commandement of God is to be punished.

*Theoph.* Now I see that there is no lie, that is not euil. But thinkest thou not, that it is to be accounted amongst the least sinnes?

*Psal.* 5. 6.

*Mat.* The often vse of it, causeth that we thinke it light; but the scripture iudgeth farre otherwise; for it saith: O Lord thou shalt destroy them that speake lies. In another place also, reckoning vp the sinnes that hinder the saluation of men, it doth by name make mention of this, and numbereth it with murthers, whoredomes, and other hainous offences: for *IOHN* saith; The fearefull and vnbeleeuing, and murderers, and whormongers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and all liers, shall haue their part in the lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Neither doth it that without cause: for it directly fighteth with the nature of God, which is the truth; contrariwise it agreeth with the diuell that is the father of lying. But there is no sinne whereunto we doe more encline, euen from our birth. Which indeede doth sufficiently shew, that by originall sinne we haue put off the image of God, and haue put on the image of the diuell: as it hath beene declared before, namely in the chapter of Man.

*Apoc.* 21. 8.

*Theoph.* Enough hath beene spoken concerning the former part of this commandement, that is, of the prohibition: it followeth therefore, that we come to the others, that is, to that that is commanded.

*Mat.* In it is commanded, that we helpe our neighbours, with our testimonie, if at any time neede shall so require, both publikely in the place of iudgement, and priuately without that place. Moreouer, that to our power wee defend the good name of our neighbour, that wee put farre away the slander raised vp against him, at least witnesse by  
our



our fowre countenance, that we be not pleased with such speeches. For Salomon saith; as the North winde driueth away the raine, so doth an angrie countenance the slanderous tongue. Prou 25 24

Last of all, that in all things wee pleasure our neighbour; if he shall stand in neede of our counsell, to comfort him in his troubles. If at any time he goe astray, moderately and by the rule of loue to admonish him, that he may be brought againe into the right way. These be the chiefe points, wherein our neighbour may be holden of vs by our speech, according to the meaning of this commandement.

*Theoph.* I haue nothing further to aske concerning the exposition of it. Notwithstanding before we come to the tenth commandement, wherein the inward lust or concupiscence of the minde is forbidden, I would vnderstand of thee, to what commandement the forbidding of drunkenness and enuie is to be referred: which are two most common finnes.

*Mat.* There be some finnes, which for the diuers respect of the effects, may be referred to the forbidding of diuers commandements. Of which sort it is certaine they bee, which thou hast euen now mentioned. For, we may refer drunkenness to the prohibition contained in the second, third, and fourth commandement of this latter Table. For it bringeth forth brawlings; which sometimes murders and slaughters do follow. Moreouer, although drunkards abstaine from the slaughter of others, yet are they guiltie of the murder they commit against themselves, according to the prouerbe: Gluttonie slaieth more then the sword. Furthermore it stirreth vp men to lust. It also bringeth them to pouertie, which theft followeth. Adde hereunto, that whosoeuer wasteth the gifts of God so intemperately, with the want whereof may be oppressed, are in that respect holden guiltie of theft.

Against drunkenness.

Last of all, when they are heat with wine, the tongue by and by breaketh loose; and vnbridledly, by slandering and backbiting shamefully defameth the good name of our neighbour.

*Theoph.* Thou hast indeede reckoned vp many sins that spring

spring from the abuse of a most excellent creature of God.

*Mat.* But by that, it appeareth, how great the corruption of man is. For, he is not onely an enemy vnto God, but also to himselfe, forasmuch as he abuseth to his owne destruction, the gift that God hath giuen him to his profit and delight. As for example, God hath giuen wine to bee nourishment, but man turneth it to poison: God hath giuen it to reioyce our heart, but man changeth it into heauinesse; God hath giuen it to preserue the health of the body, but man altereth it to the sicknesse of body and soule. To conclude (that which is the greatest thing of all) by it, man wittingly and willingly transformeth himselfe into a brute beast, when as he spoyleth himselfe of reason, by the which he differeth from them.

*Theoph.* Thou saiest true. But I see not what it is, by the which men be allured to that sinne. For neither glory, nor profit, nor pleasure can be sought by it. For what pleasure is it if a man drinke, not being a thirst?

*Mat.* No greater than it should be, if a man after dainty cheare did presently eate. But therein the very brute beasts go beyond them in moderation. For, a man shall not see any of them endure to drinke more than is necessary.

*Theoph.* Hitherto enough of drunkennesse: now let vs speake somewhat concerning enuy.

Of enuy.

*Mat.* I may bee referred to two commandements: Namely, to the second of this latter Table, and also vnto this fift. For, seeing hatred is the perpetuall companion of it, it compelleth men very oftentimes to murder, which is sufficiently proued by the example of CAIN.

Gen. 4. 8.

*Theoph.* Thou iudgeth rightly. For, by enuy CAIN was stirred vp to kill his brother, because his sacrifice was not accepted of God, but ABLES. Let vs now see how enuyie may be referred to this commandement.

1. Cor. 13. 4.

*Mat.* Because by it wee are moued to powre out manifold slanders, and back-bitings against our neighbour, no lesse than by hatred that continually accompanieth it. But this sinne is most lothsome vnto God, as that which proceedeth of pride, and is contrary to Christian charitie, whercof PAUL saith; Charitie enuieth not.

The

## The tenth Commandement.

Thou shalt not couet thy neighbours house, thou shalt not couet thy neighbours wife, nor his servant, nor his maide, nor his ox, nor his asse, nor any thing that is his.

*Theoph.* The tenth commandement is behuid; the meaning whereof I haue heard before: wee are therefore to come to the exposition of the text it selfe. Containeth it any other thing besides the desiring of our neighbours house and family, in it expressed?

*Mat.* God meant to rehearse such things, the objects whereof for the most part are wont to affect and moue vs, vnder which he comprehendeth all of the same kinde; namely all lusts, by the which wee are stirred vp to the transgressing of any commandement of the latter Table.

*Theoph.* Is not that only lust forbidden in this commandement, whereunto our will giueth consent?

*Mat.* That lust was contained in the former commandements, wherein not only wicked deedes, but also counsels, and deliberate consent of the will be forbidden. Therefore in this commandement, the Lord proceedeth further, for he requireth somewhat more of vs, namely, that wee be not tickled with any kinde of lust, although our will consent not, yea also be against it.

*The.* But how canst thou shew that this is the mind of God?

*Mat.* Most easily, for the Apostle saith; I had not known lust, if the Law had not said, Thou shalt not lust. But it is more cleare than light, that all men without the Law could haue vnderstood, that concupiscence ioyned with consent was sinne: and therefore it is apparent, that the Apostle ment, that the concupiscence which the will resisteth is forbidden by the Law. That may also be gathered by the summe of the Law, wherein the Lord commandeth; that wee loue him with all our heart, with all our soule, and with all our mind: wherevpon it followeth, that wee cannot be tickled euen with the least concupiscence, but presently there is some thing in our minde void of the loue of God, and therefore that is a sin against the Law.

*Theoph.* So farre forth as I see, God in his Law requireth of vs most exact perfection.

*Mat.*

Rom. 7. 7.  
Math. 22. 37.

Math. 5. 48.

*Mat.* He requireth it indeed. For hee would haue vs to be perfect, euen as he himselfe is perfect. And therefore he hath set before vs his Law in steed of a glasse, and a most perfect patterne of righteousness, that the life of man might bee conformable to the puritie of his diuine Maiestie. In so much as if there were any that did perfectly keepe it he should in his life perfectly set forth the image and likenesse of God.

*The summe of the Law. Math. 22. 37.*

Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy minde. This is the first and the great commandment. And the second is like vnto this; Thou shalt loue thy neighbour, as thy selfe. On these two commandements hang the whole Law and the Prophets.

*Theoph.* I am thoroughly satisfied concerning the exposition of the Law. Now I would haue the sum of it, which you repeated euen now, to be declared by you, that I may vnderstand it. And first, why he comprehendeth all the keeping of the first Table, vnder the loue of himselfe?

*Mat.* This was done, that wee might vnderstand from what fountaine that loue floweth, and what effects it worketh in vs.

*Theoph.* From whence floweth it?

*Mat.* From the knowledge of him, and the assurance of the loue wherewith he loueth vs. For it cannot be that we should loue any, except wee know him, and doe certainly know that we are loued againe of him.

*Theoph.* What effect worketh that loue of God in vs?

*Mat.* Willing obedience. For, wee desire to obey him whome we loue, and the more loue increaseth, the more obedience increaseth. By these things therefore it is plaine, that the obseruation of the whole first Table, is contained vnder the loue of God. For he cannot be loued of vs, but we doe in like manner,

1 Reuerence him.

2 Put our whole trust in him.

3 Call vpon him, whensoever any necessitie presseth vs.

4. And

And giue him thanks for his innumerable benefits. Moreover, if he be loued of vs; wee will not giue the worship due vnto him alone; to creatures, or to dumbe idols: but according as hee requireth, we will spiritually worship him.

If hee be loued of vs, it will be our chiefest delight to speak of him: which will be done of vs with due reuerence and religion, diligently taking heede that wee offend him not in a word.

If (I say) he be loued of vs, his Sabbaths shall be our delight, because we may speake with him more commodiously, as well by the holly ministry of the word, and reading, by the which he speaketh vnto vs; as by prayers, by the which we speake vnto him. Moreover, whose delights will engraue such sweetnesse in our minds, that wee shall easily despise all sports, and other worldly things, wherein worldly men are wont to spend those dayes.

Hereupon it is plaine, that so many as loue God, doe keepe the whole first Table.

*Theoph.* But wherefore doth the Lord adde; that God must bee loued of vs with all our heart, with all our soule, and with all our vnderstanding

*Mat.* To the end we may know, that our mind and soule ought to be filled with his loue: and therefore it is required, that he might bee most entirely loued of vs aboue all others, aboue parents, brethren, sisters, wiues, children, friends, goods, yea, and our selues also. But if at any time a man should be set betweene two loues, whereof the one were that that is due vnto God, and the other, that that is due vnto parents, brethren, sisters, wiues, children, friends, and that these two loues cannot stand together; so as while we apply our selues to the one, wee neglect the other: then the Lord is to be preferred before all the other, and all other things are to be neglected; that we may Follow him. For so Christ himselfe saith; Hee that loueth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of mee; and Math. 10 17 hee that loueth sonne or daughter more than mee, is not worthy of mee. As if hee said, whosoever forsaketh not wife and children, and all his goods, rather than to denie me, is not worthy of mee. And that more is, in the same sense

sense he saith; If any cometh vnto me, & hateth not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, & sisters, and euen his owne life, he cannot be my disciple.

*Theoph.* But vnlesse I be deceived, the loue of God doth not wholly, but in part seclude the loue of our neighbour.

*Mat.* It doth indeede wholly seclude all false loue, but the true loue, it establissheth. Now that is it which Christ made the summe of the latter Table, in these words: Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe.

*Theoph.* Declare vnto me that true loue which is establisshed by the loue of God: then I will demand of thee why Christ made it the summe of the latter Table?

*Mat.* There is our neighbour loued of vs, when we loue him only in God, and for Gods cause. For, if he be loued of vs, either because he is our kinsman or friend, without any respect to the loue of God, that loue is not Christian but naturall: and agreeth vnto brut beasts. For this cause Christ said; If you loue them that loue you, what thanke shall you haue? for euen sinners loue those that loue them. Therefore also hath hee commanded the loue of our enemies: for therein appeareth most manifestly that where of we now speake, namely, that our neighbour is to be loued for God: for an enemy cannot be loued for his owne sake, yea rather he ought to be hated. But when he is considered in God, then he ceaseth to be an enemy, & is made a neighbour. Euen as therefore all foulds doe come out of the sea, and doe fall againe into the sea: so our loue towards our neighbour, ought to begin in God, and to end in God: otherwise it is vicious and euill.

*Theoph.* Wherefore saiest thou, that this true loue of our neighbour, which thou hast euen now expounded, is establisshed by the loue of God?

*Mat.* Because it is one loue, but the difference standeth in the objects: for when God saw that himselfe, because he is inuisible, should hardly be loued of vs that doe so much cleaue to the loue of things that be seene; he hath set our neighbour before vs as a visible object, in whom hee engraued his owne image, that wee should worship him by shewing towards our neighbour the same loue that is due vnto himselfe, and bestow vpon our neighbour, some

of

Luke 11. 31



of those duties and benefits, which by good right doe altogether appertaine to his Maiesty: Forasmuch as (according to the saying of DAVID) our well doing reacheth not to him, and indeed he hath no need of it. Wherefore as no man can rightly loue his neighbor, but he first loueth God so can no man sincerely loue God, but hee doth also loue his neighbour, whom he hath so earnestly commended vnto vs. Hence is that saying of IOHN: If any say, I loue God, and hateth his brother, he is a lier: For he that loveth not his brother, whome hee seeth, how can he loue God, whom he hath not seene?

*Theoph.* Now I vnderstand what the true loue of our neighbour is, and how it springeth from the loue of God. It is therefore to be seene, why Christ setteth it downe for the summe of the latter Table.

*Mat.* Because, as the loue of God containeth the whole obseruation of the first Table, as hath beene said before: so the loue our neighbour, the whole second Table, so that he be loued of vs as our selues. Which Christ did not omit.

*Theoph.* Declare these things vnto me more at large.

*Mat.* If wee loue our neighbours as our selues, we shall doe to them, all that wee would haue them doe vnto vs: and we will not do those things, which we would not haue done to our selues. And therefore we will honour parents, and other superiors: for if we were in their place, we would be honoured. Wee will doe noe despight to our neighbour, which we would not suffer to be done to our selues. Wee will not by adultery defile the wife, sister, or daughter of our neighbour, because we would not haue so great an injury done to our selues. We will not steale his goods; yea, rather, if the matter so require, we will relieue his pouerty with our plenty; for so would wee haue it done with our selues. We will not beare false witnesse against him, neither back-bite him, neither will wee vexe or moue him, with scornes, flouts, mocks, and taunts: for we would take it grieuously, if it were done to our selues. To conclude, we will couet nothing that is his, forasmuch as if any coueted our goods, we would condemne him.

By which it appeareth, that the fulfilling of the second Table

Table is contained vnder the loue of our neighbour, and the breaking of it, vnder the hatred of him.

*Theoph.* But who is our neighbour, of whome there is mention in this place, and elsewhere in many places in the Scripture?

Who is our  
neighbour.

Luk. 10. 3

*Mat.* Vnder this name bee comprehended, not onely friends, kinsfolkes, and alliance by marriage, but also all others, of whatsoeuer sexe, country, condition, or religion, they be; and that more is, our enemies also, which is plaine to gather, by the example alleadged by Christ.

Gal. 10.

But that letteth not a distinction of persons, of whome we ought to helpe some before others, according to the bond wherewith we be bound to them, and by name, their faith. For *Paul* saith, Doe good vnto all, but especially to the householde of faith. In which words he teacheth, that charity or loue rightly ordered, beginneth with the faithfull, and afterwards is deuied to others. For, if our loue (which we taught before) ought to be referred vnto God, verily, the neerer any commeth to God, so much the more high degree of it doth he deserue: then the rest we ought to referue to our kindred and allies, as euery one shall be ioined to vs by the nearer bond.

*The other part of this Chapter: For what end good workes are to be done, and what is the vse of them.*

*Theoph.* We haue made an end of the former part of this chapter, wherein thou hast declared, what workes be worthy the name of good workes; let vs therefore come to the other part, which we appointed to a discourse of their end and vse.

The faithfull  
cannot be iu-  
stified by  
Workes.

First therefore I demand, whether the faithfull may be iustified by good workes? forasmuch as by regeneration they be made fit to doe them.

*Mat.* Two things let, that it cannot be so!

*Theoph.* What are they?

*Mat.* Because iustification, & therefore saluation goeth before good workes. For the way which the holy Ghost vseth to make vs able for them, is this, namely, that by faith it ioyneth vs with Christ. Whereof Christ himselfe is wit-  
nesse

helle, when he saith; As the branch can beare no fruit, of it selfe, that is, except it abide in the vine, euen so you, except you abide in me. I am the Vine: you are the branches: he that abideth in me, and he in whom I abide, bringeth forth much fruit. For without me you can doe nothing. John 154

Therefore by faith beeing vnited or made one with Christ, we are iustified and saued, by the imputation of his most perfect holinesse and righteousnesse: the effects or fruits wherof, be the good woorkes that we doe. Therefore, good works go not before our iustification and saluation, but they follow after, as it was well said by one of the Ancients. But that which followeth after, cannot be the cause of that which goeth before. By this argument PAVI pro- Imputation is to haue it ac- counted ours,  
ueeth, that we are not iustified by workes. For he saith: You are saued by grace, through faith, & that not of your selues it is the gift of God: not of workes, least any man should boast himselfe. For wee are his workmanship, created in Christ Iesus vnto good works, which God hath ordained that we should walke in them. In which words he sheweth, that good workes cannot be said to be the cause of our saluation, because they bee done by God himselfe in vs through Christ, after that we be saued by faith in him. Eph. 2. 8

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other thing, which thou saidst did let, that wee are not iustified nor saued by our good workes.

*Mat.* It is more plaine than the former: namely because to the end a man may be iustified by workes, it is necessarily required that he haue fulfilled the whole Law, and that he be not found so much as sprinkled or wet with any, euen the very least spot of sinne, before God. For, euen as one little drop of inke staineth a whole glasse of cleare water: so one onely sinne is sufficient to ouerthrow all righteousness of workes. For this cause *James* saith; Who- Iam. 2. 20  
soeuer keepeth the whole Law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all. But it is certaine, that the faultfall in this life, cannot at any time come to the highest degree of that perfection, no, nor to the middlemost. Therefore the defect or want of righteousness doth by many degrees exceede all the ablenesse vnto it, which any may attain vnto, by the guidance of the holy Ghost. Therefore or, not, 1  
by

by workes they ought to looke for the curse onely, which the Scripture pronounceth against those that haue not perfectly fulfilled the Law.

*Theoph.* How knowest thou, that the faithfull after regeneration, cannot fulfill the Law?

Whether the  
faithfull can  
fulfill the law  
Rom. 7. 34. 18

Psal. 143. 3

*Mat.* PAUL doth most plainly witness in his owne person, speaking of the condition of a man regenerated, in these words; We know that the Law is spirituall, but I am carnall, solde vnder sin: for to will is present with me, but I find no meanes to performe that which is good. For this cause DAVID saith; Enter not into iudgement with thy seruant, for no man liuing shall be iustified in thy sight.

Luke 1. 6

*Theoph.* But LUYKE, speaking of ZACHARY, and ELYZABETH, saith; They were both iust in the sight of God, walking in al the commandements and ordinances of the Lord, without reproofe.

Gen. 6. 9

*Mat.* The same thing is also said of NOAH, by MOSES; NOAH was a iust and an vpright man in his time. Howbeit, the Scripture saith not, that they were without sin: but that they diligently applied themselues vnto righteousness, and laboured to walke in the commandements of the Lord. In which sense the faithfull in many places are called iust or righteous, as well to note that zeale by the which they seeke to come to the perfection of righteousness, as also that we may vnderstand, that their obedience, notwithstanding it bee imperfect, is as acceptable to God through Christ, as if it were perfect.

*Theoph.* But how knowest thou, that this is the meaning of the Scripture, and that they, who it saith were iust, were not without sinne, seeing the words sound otherwise?

1. Ioh. 1. 10

*Mat.* It is not hard to gather it out of the things, which presently after be obserued of the Scripture it selfe: namely, that ZACHARY beleeued not the words of the Angell, and that NOAH was drunken. Moreover, these things bee plainly expressed in it: If we say, that we haue not sinned, we make God a lier, and his word is not in vs. And indeed if we doe but a little more attentiuely consider of it, what is he that in this life can euer,

Love God with all his heart?

Put

Put his whole trust in him alone?

Perfectly rule his owne affections?

So keepe his tongue vnder, that it send out no idle words? whereof at the last day, Christ saith an account must be giuen. *Math. 12.36*

So keepe his eyes in order, that they lust not, and his minde, that it thinke on no vaine thing.

When he imploieih himselfe about the worship of God, to doe it with that affection, namely, so perfect, pure, and whole, as it is required of him?

Finally, who is it, which letterli not many occasions of doing well, or doing something better than he doth it, to escape him?

If our owne heart condemne vs in these; and in many other the greatest things, God (saith Iohn) is greater than *1. Iohn 3.20* our heart, that is, knoweth innumerable sinnes, which wee our selues know not. Hence is that saying of DAVID: Who *psal. 19.23* vnderstandeth his faults? cleanse me from secret faults.

*Theoph.* I haue in thy speech obserued foure kinds of sins, whereof men are guilty before God.

1. The committing of euill.
2. The leauing of good vndone.
3. Hidden sinnes.
4. The imperfection of the good deeds, which in small number are done of vs.

Which things, if they haue place in the faithfull, I must needs confesse, that they be farre off from being iustified by their workes.

*Mat.* There is no doubt, but these be in the very best, which also the Scripture confirmeth, when it saith: Man *Iob 15.16* drinketh iniquity as water: as if it said, that iniquity were as familiar and common a thing with him, as to drinke. We be all of vs as an vncleane thing; and all our righte-ousnesse as filthy clouts. The children of men are vanity, *Isay 44.6* the chiefe men are liers: to lay them vpon a ballance, they *psal 62.9* are altogether lighter than vanity.

*Theoph.* Doe these things agree to the faithfull, as well, as to the vnfaithfull?

*Mat.* Yea verily: for they of whom these things were written, were faithfull, and beleeuers; neuertheless, they did *1. Iohn 2.23*

What difference concerning good workes is betwene the faithfull and the vnfaithfull.  
Rom. 7. 16.

reckon themselves also in that number, as *Esay* by name, for he saith, We are all as vncleane things: and againe; All our righteousnesse is as filthy clours. But if our iustice and righteousnesse be such, how I pray thee must it be thought of our vnrighteousnesse and sinnes?

*Theoph.* Seeing the matter is so, it seemeth altogether to follow, that there is very little difference concerning good workes, betwene the beleeuers and the vnbeleeuers.

*Mat.* It followeth not, for sinne onely dwelleth in the faithfull, but it raigneth not: howbeit in the vnfaithfull and vnbeleeuers, it both dwelleth and raigneth. Therefore euery beleuer may vse that saying of *PAVL*; I do not the good that I would. The vnbeleeuers cleane contrariwise; Wee doe not so much euill as wee would: Which, howsoeuer they speake not, they haue it in their minde: As it is to be seene in drunkards, thecues, fornicators, ambitious and couetous persons, whose lust can neuer be satisfied. Moreover, the wicked waxe euery day worse and worse: contrariwise, the faithfull make proceedings in goodnesse, by the which ( notwithstanding they be but small ) it is apparant that sinne is overcome of them.

*Theoph.* But how commeth it to passe, that a beleuer, being regenerated and lightened with the holy Ghost, cannot perfectly obey God?

*Mat.* Because our regeneration is only begun in vs, but in this life is neuer perfected. For by that meanes the Lord will keepe vs in humilitie, as also together with it make place to his owne infinite mercy. Therefore so long as wee liue here, our faith as well as our repentance, be very farre off from perfection. For there is still behinde in vs some part of our corruption, which the Scripture calleth flesh, and the old man: it resisteth or withstandeth the part that is regenerate, which is called the spirit, and the new man. And all these things *PAVL* notably comprehendeth in these words; The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these be contrary the one to the other, so as you doe not the things that you would.

Gal. 5. 7.

The battell of the flesh and the spirit.

*Theoph.* Wherein standeth the struing of the flesh and the spirit?

*Mat.* 1. The flesh is puffed vp with ignorance, and loue of



of the world: but the spirit is endued with the knowledge, loue, and feare of God.

2 The flesh strueth to follow it owne pleasures, and wicked affections, for it is giuen vnto all finnes: but the spirit giueth it selfe to this one thing, that it may obey God, and set forth his glory.

3 The flesh is full of distrust and impatience: but the spirit humbleth it selfe vnder the mighty hand of God, resteth in his mercy, and fashioneth it selfe vnto his will.

Finally, the flesh holdeth vs in these earthly things: but the spirit lifteth vs vp into heauen.

Moreouer, this contrarietie breedeth in vs continuall warfare: for the flesh alwaies stirreth vs vp and setteth vpon vs, with so many intisements and crafts, that except wee take diligent heede, wee be easily deceiued and overcome of it. For this cause Christ warneth vs, that we should watch; Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation; (that is, lest you be overcome of temptation) the spirit indeede is ready, but the flesh is weake.

*Theoph.* Doth the spirit at length goe alwaies away with the victorie?

*Mat.* It doth indeed, but not without great labour: for the flesh many waies woundeth vs: for it causeth vs many times to fall into most hainous sins. Moreouer, although we doe often overcome, it ceaseth not to renew the battell. For the diuell, the enemy of our saluation, ioineeth himselfe vnto it, who vseth that domesticall or household enemy, that he may the more easily enter into our hearts, and at length overcome vs. For this cause PAUL most frequently desired to bee deliuered from it; for hee saith; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer mee from this body of death? Hee calleth it death, because hee thought that continuall battell more grievous than death it selfe.

*Theoph.* Now I will returne to the order of our discourse: for I see that the faithfull cannot fulfill the Law of God. And this also I grant, that the faithfull cannot be altogether iustified by their workes. But may not this bee done in part, so as Christ supply that which wanteth?

*Mat.* This doubtlesse cannot be: For JAMES saith; Who-  
focuer keepeth the whole law, & yet faileth in one point,

is guilty of all. Therefore PAUL, intreating of the way whereby we attaine iustification and saluation, excludeth works, not in part, but wholly. As for example: In the Epistle to the Romans, after long disputatiō of this matter, at length he addeth; We conclude therefore, that a man is iustified by faith, without the workes of the Law: & in the chapter following; To him that worketh, the wages is not counted by fauour, but by debt: but to him that worketh not, but beleueth in him that iustificth the vngodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. The same also he writeth in another place; You are saued by grace through faith, and that not of your selues, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any should boast himselfe. In which words hee doth sufficiently declare, that good works be of no account before God, to iustifie and saue vs: but that all is to be ascribed to the only mercy & grace of God, by faith in Christ. Moreover, grace should not bee truly grace in respect of God, if it be not holy and altogether free: for workes and it cannot stand together in the matter of saluation.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because the one destroyeth the other, as the Apostle testifieth to the Romans in these words; If we be saued by grace, it is no more of works; or else were grace no more grace: but if it be of works, it is no more grace; or els were worke no more worke. Where he sheweth that there is no place for the grace of God, vntil we haue throwne away all trust & confidence in our owne works, which thing the same apostle testifieth, that himselfe did. For although concerning the righteousness which is by the law, he were without reproofe: hee esteemed all the good workes as dung, that he might be found not hauing his owne righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.

In another place also, he warneth vs of the same thing; Yee are made void of Christ, as many of you as be iustified by the law, and are fallen from grace. Now he speaketh to those that would ioin the righteousness of the law, with the righteousness of faith.

*Theoph.* But some doe obiekt, that the Apostle, whensoever he saith, we are not iustified by the workes of the law, speaketh of the ceremoniall law, that was then abolished by

Rom 3.28.

Rom 4.4.

Eph. 3.8.

Why we be  
iustified be-  
fore God no  
otherwise  
than by faith.

Rom. 11.6.

Phil. 3.6.

Gal. 5.4.

by the comming of Christ, but not of the morall Law.

*Mat.* That is a veine shift, which also is most easie to be confuted, by the other of the Apostles speech: & first of all in the Epistle to the Romanes (before he draweth out this conclusion that is the third Chapter: By the workes of the law, shal no flesh be iustified in the sight of God) in the first chapter he proueth at large, that all the heathen were full of all vnrighteousnesse, fornication, wickednes, couetousnes, and other innumerable sinnes. But in the second he sheweth that the Iewes notwithstanding they made a faire shew of outward holinesse, yet were infected and stained with the same sins they condemned in others. Whereupon it is plaine that in this place, there is onely mention of morall workes; and not of the ceremoniall. Likewise also in the Epistle to the Galathians, where he doth especially intreate of the ceremonies, hee alleadged both the sentences of Moses, namely the curse to those that fulfill not the whole Law, and life to those that keepe it. And in the former indeede he teacheth, that so many as trust to the workes of the Law to be iustified by them, be vnder the curse, because they cannot wholly and fully keepe it. And in the other, he declareth, that there is so much difference betweene the Law and faith, that if any man bee iustified by faith, he cannot in any sort obtaine it by the Law. But it is certaine that as well the curse threatned to the transgressors of the Law, as the promise of eternall life made to such as fulfill it, are not to be restrained to the ceremonies alone, but are also to be referred to the morall Law, and that to be more right: foras much as God (as Hosea saith) preferreth mercy before sacrifice. Moreouer, after the Apostle in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians hath affirmed, that wee are saued by grace through faith, and that not of our selues; he addeth; But of the gift of God: not of workes, least any man should boast himselfe. Which words doe most evidently shew, that the Apostle speaketh not of the ceremoniall workes, but of morall, which giueth men farre more large matter of boasting than the ceremoniall do. Finally, when he writeth to Titus, that we are saued not by the workes of righteousness which we haue done, but by the mercy of God; who

Hos. 6. 6.

Titus 3. 5.

seeth not that the Apostle doth especially intreat of moral workes? to which the title of righteousness agreeth farre better than to the ceremoniall. Which things beeing so, there is no doubt but that the Apostle whensoever hee speaketh of the workes of the Law, to prooue that wee are neither saued nor iustified by them, doth no lesse meane the morall than the ceremoniall, yea rather that he doth shut out both from the cause of saluation & righteousness.

*Theoph.* But why doth he so often call them the works of the Law?

*Mat.* To teach, that if the workes commanded of God, and euen contained in his owne law, bee to no purpose to iustifie vs, then the workes commanded and deuised by men are much lesse able and fit to doe it:

*Theoph.* Now doe I agree vnto thee. For I perceiue that we are neither iustified nor saued by workes, neither in the whole, nor in part, as hath bin diligently prooued by thee. And verily (vnlesse I bee deceiued) there is great iniurie done to the glory of God, while men goe about to darken the force and power of his grace and mercy, mingling the same with the filthynesse of our works. But seeing the matter is so, why did God giue the morall law?

Why God  
gaue a law  
that wee can  
not keepe.  
Of the vse of  
the law.  
Gal. 3 21, 22.

*Mat.* The Apostle witnesseth, that it was not to the end we should be iustified or saued by it. For he saith, If there had beene a Law giuen that could haue giuen life, surely righteousness should haue bin by the law: But the Scripture hath concluded all vnder sin, thus the promise by the faith of Iesus Christ should be giuen to them that beleeue. Notwithstanding it is not vnprofitable to the faithfull, nay rather they reape a double benefite by it, wherein be comprehended the ends for the which God gaue it vnto vs. I said to the faithfull, because it hath this only worke toward the vnbeleeuers, that their condemnation may bee the more heauy: forasmuch as comming to the knowledge of Gods will by it, they doe willingly run into the contrary.

The vse of  
the Law, in  
respect of the  
vnfaithfull.

*Theoph.* Let vs consider of that two-fold benefite which thou saidst the beleeuers reape by it: and declare the first.

*Mat.* It is noted by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Galathians. For after that he hath shewed that we cannot attaine saluation by the Law, hee addeth: Wherefore then serueth

serueth the Law? It was added because of the transgressions, that is, that by the helpe of it, wee might acknowledge our sins, as the same Apostle in another place expoundeth it in these words; By the law commeth the knowledge of sinne. For if we doe examine our words by that perfection, which the Law requireth of vs, then it shall appeare most euidently, how many waies we be guilty before God, and therefore what seuerall condemnation we haue deserved.

*Theoph.* But what profit haue we by that?

*Mat.* Much. For, as a sicke man, except hee thorowly feele his sicknesse, and perceiue present danger, will not goe to the Physitian: euen so the feeling of our sinnes, and the danger of eternall death, which wee see hanging ouer our heads, driueth vs to seeke for that true Physitian of our soules, Christ Iesus, from whom by faith wee may receiue the remedie offered vs in the Gospell: which otherwise we would haue neglected. Therefore Paul saith: The Law was our School-master to bring vs vnto Christ. And in another place; Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness vnto euery one that beleueth. And this is the first benefite which we haue by the Law.

*Theoph.* Shew briefly the other.

*Mat.* After that we be regenerated, and therefore made fit to do good workes, then the Law teacheth vs whatsoeuer is to be performed of vs that wee may obey God. For, although we cannot come to the perfection whereunto it leadeth vs: yet wee must set it before our eyes, as a marke whereat we are to leuell continually, that daily more and more we may strue to hit it. Hereunto appertaineth that exhortation of Christ: Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heauen is perfect. The Law therefore is, as it were a glasse, wherein we may behold the spots of our soule, and so indeed bee compelled by faith to wash them away in Christs blood. Moreouer, it is a lanterne vnto our feet, which guideth vs that wee goe not out of the right waie from the path of righteousness.

*Theoph.* Seeing good workes be not the cause of saluation, it seemeth to follow that they be altogether vnprofitable, and therefore that wee need not to be greatly careful of them.

*Mat.*

Gal. 3. 19.

Rom. 3. 20.

Gal. 3. 24.

Rom. 10. 4.

Math. 5. 48.

L  
Luke 1. 75.Ephes. 1. 3.  
p. 10.

Tit. 1. 13.

A three fold  
vse of good  
workes.

Mat. 5. 16.

Phil. 1. 11.

*Mat.* It followeth not. For God hath deliuered vs out of the hands of our spirituall enemies, namely the Diuell and sinne (saith ZACHARIE) that we should serue him with holinesse and righteousness in his sight, al the daies of our life. *PAUL* also confirmeth the same thing in the Epistle to the Ephesians. For after that he hath affirmed, that we are saued by grace through faith, and that not of our selues, it was the gift of God, not of works: presently he addeth; For wee are his workmanship created in Christ Iesus vnto good works, which God hath prepared that wee should walke in them. And againe in another place; The grace of God that bringeth saluation vnto all men hath appeared, teaching vs, that denying vngodlinesse and worldly lusts, we should liue soberly, and iustly, and godly in this present world. Thou seest how diligently good works be commanded in the Scripture, as those that be acceptable vnto God through Christ, by whose holinesse all their filthynesse, and vncleannes is couered.

*Theoph.* But what vse is there of them?

*Mat.* The vse is threefold, and those indeed most profitable. The first, which is also the chiefe, respecteth the glory of God, that ought to be deerer vnto vs than our owne saluation. But by them it is especially aduanced, as it appeareth by the words of Christ, Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heauen. For this cause *PAUL* warning the Philipians to be full of the fruites of righteousness which are by Christ Iesus, addeth; To the glory and praise of God,

The second vse respecteth our neighbour. For, by the vprightness and integritie of our life, hee is prouoked to the same earnest desire and exercise of godlinesse. I passe ouer the good turnes which hee hath by our charitie and good works. The third vse standeth in this, that by them our conscience is quieted. For, they bee testimonies and witnesses of our faith, and therefore of our saluation.

*Theoph.* But how can it bee, that good works shall bee witnesses of our faith?

*Mat.* Wee haue already shewed the cause before, namely for that the holy Ghost doth neuer worke faith in our hearts



hearts, without repentance, from whence good works do flow, which therefore be visible or seene testimonies of our inuisible or vnseene faith: euen as the goodnesse of the tree is iudged by the good fruit, and the inward health or soundnesse of a mans body, by the outward disposition of all the parts.

*Theoph.* Therefore, vnlesse I be deceiued, this thou saiest, that faith cannot be without good works.

Faith cannot  
be without  
good works.

*Mat.* I say so, Euen as fire cannot be without heate, and the Sun without light. And verily faith of it owne nature bringeth forth good works. For how can it bee that our hearts should be reformed by faith, so as wee doe embrace the loue wherewith God loued vs in Christ, but that they be also stricken with loue toward him againe, by meanes whereof they both earnestly desire to obey him, and doe labour to avoid rebellion against his Maiestie? I adde further, that faith can no more stand together with an euill conscience, than water with fire. For it cannot bee, so long as sinne reigneth in vs, and we willingly offend God, that wee should be assured of his loue, so as wee may put our whole trust in him, and repose our hope in his fauour and goodnesse, notwithstanding that infinite mercie of Christs death be knowne and perceiued of vs.

*Theoph.* As far as I see, faith bringeth forth good works, by the which it is afterward preferued in our hearts.

*Mat.* Yea verily: euen as fire causeth ashes, wherewith it is afterward cherished, fed, and maintained. But by these things it is plaine, that it is so far off that faith (which notwithstanding some say) should destroy good works, that rather by it they are built vp and fortified.

Faith the mo-  
ther of good  
workes of  
which it is af-  
ter preferued

*Theoph.* Seeing then faith cannot be without good works, it followeth, that all they which boist of it, & doe no good workes, be liars, and deceiue themselves.

*Mat.* It followeth: and that is the disputation of JAMES [122, 2, 3] the Apostle against the Libertines, whom he speaketh vnto in these words; Shew me thy faith out of thy workes, and I will shew thee my faith by my workes; whereby hee sheweth, that no man can be certaine of his faith, which is inuisible, vnlesse he haue visible testimonies of it namely, good works. Whereupon it is that the same Apostle in the  
end

Jam. 2. 26.

end of that Chapter concludeth thus; As the body without the spirit is dead, euen so that faith that is without good workes is dead: that is, is not true, but a shadow, and a vaine empty likenesse of it.

*Theoph.* Therefore wee are neither iustified nor saued without good workes, although, neither of them, nor by them

Rom. 8. 14

Gal. 5. 22. 23.

1. Cor. 6. 9.

Mat. 7. 21

Mat. 5. 20.

*Mat.* I grant it. For although the kingdome of heauen be not the wages of seruants, but the inheritance of children: yet no man is reckoned among the children of God, that is not led by the spirit of God, (as *PAVL* speaketh:) & therefore doth the workes of the spirit, such as are these, loue, ioy, peace, long suffering, gentlenes, goodnes, faith, meekenesse, temperance, and such like. Therefore the same Apostle in another place giueth warning; Be not deceiued: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor wantons, nor theeues, nor couetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdome of God. The same thing doth also Christ himselfe confirme, when he saith; Not euery one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but hee that doth my Fathers will that is in heauen.

And againe in another place; I say vnto you, Except your righteousness exceede the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharises, you shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen.

*Theoph.* Now do I consent vnto you, and doe acknowledge that good workes be not vnprofitable, although wee bee neither iustified nor saued by them: Yea rather that they be of speciall vse, and therefore that the faithfull with all their hearts should giue themselues to them, forasmuch as they serue,

1 To the glory of God,

2 The edification of our neighbour,

3 And to the confirmation of our faith and saluation,

*Mat.* Adde heereunto, that God to whom they be acceptable through Christ, rewardeth them with sundrie blessings both spirituall and temporall, according to the promises almost without number contained in his word. Moreover, higher is to be referred the word of Reward, which

which is vsed in many places in the Scripture: as whē *Iob*<sup>s</sup> exhorteth the faithfull to perseuerance, hee saith; Looke vnto your selues, that wee lose not the things wee haue wrought; but that yee may haue a full reward. Christ also speaking of those which suffer persecution for righteousness sake, saith; Great is your reward in heauen. In another place also, Whosoever shall giue a cup of cold water onely, to one of those little ones in the name of a Disciple, shall not lose his reward. 2. Iohn 3  
Math. 5. 12  
Math. 10. 42

*Theoph.* Seeing therefore God promiseth reward to our workes, it seemeth they deserue somewhat.

*Mat.* It followeth not: For that reward proceedeth of The confutation of merit.

*Theoph.* Dost thou take from the faithfull all meriting with God?

*Mat.* Not I, but the word of God: wherein his owne mercie is established, and merit is ouerthrowne euen to the very ground; for these two cannot stand together. Furthermore, if any man will a little more diligently examine the nature of Merit or Desert, he shall neuer finde that it hath any place before God.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because, that in deseruing any thing, this is

1. First required, That we be nothing in his debt, of whom we desire to deserue.

2. Secondly, That wee bring him such things as be our owne.

3 And last of all, That that which wee bring or bestow, be equall, or as much worth, as the thing that we seeke to deserue. If but any one of these conditions faile, it can be no merit or desert. How much lesse therefore, if they be all wanting together? But they bee wanting in all our good vvorkes.

*Theoph.* Declare these things vnto me one after another particularly.

*Mat.* First, Whatsoeuer good vvorkes may be performed of vs, are due vnto God by a double right, namely, of our creation and adoption. Hereupon is that saying of Christ warning his Disciples, When ye haue done all the things that are commanded you, say, Wee be vnprofitable seruants: The examination of the merit of workes.  
Luk. 17. 10.

uants:

uants : for we haue done nothing, but that which was our duty to doe.

phil. 2. 13

Moreover, it is certaine, that whatsoeuer good thing can be done of vs, is from God : who worketh in vs both the will and the deede.

2. Cor. 4. 7

Therefore it was notably said of one of the ancient Fathers ; God rewardeth his owne good works in vs, and not ours. PAUL also saith ; What hast thou, that thou hast not receiued ? and if thou hast receiued it, why dost thou boast, as though thou hadst not receiued it ? Therefore among men indeede there may bee merit or desert. For the husbandman, after he hath digged all day in the vineyard, shal receiue his reward by desert. But with God we can deserue nothing, but that he should punish vs for our offences.

The obiection of the defenders of merit.

*Theo.* The defenders of the opinion of merits, do object, that good works be not meritorious of themselves, but in respect of the promise of God himselfe, wherein hee hath promised those things which otherwise were not due.

The answer to it.

*Mat.* They are not by this pretence acquitted of sacrilege, or robbing God. For, they attribute that to themselves, which appertaineth to God alone. For, when God made that promise vnto vs, hee did it of his meere grace and fauour, and therefore merit or desert is shut out. But I Will make the whole matter plaine by a familiar example. If any King should promise his bond-slaue an hundred thousand crownes, vpon condition, that he diligently doe a busines committed to him, the bond-slaue hauing done the commandement, may require the gold, yet not because he hath deserued it. But we that haue not fulfilled the condition enioyned vs, how much lesse haue we deserued the reward promised to our workes ?

*7 heopb.* What letteth that we fulfill it not, when we obey the Lord from the heart ?

Of the imperfection of our works.

*Mat.* The cause hath beene declared already before ; namely, for that there can bee no good thing done of vs that is not vncleane and defiled. For the most pure water, if it runne through an vncleane conduit, is corrupted with the stinke of it : so the good works that God worketh in vs, be soiled and stained with the filthinesse of our flesh. Therefore euen as the promise of reward is altogether free,

free, and without respect of any desert, so is the fulfilling of that promise.

*Theoph.* Why therefore doth God promise a reward to our workes, which he may by right require of vs?

*Mat.* That that promise may be as a spurre vnto vs, by the which we might be driuen forward, to the desire and doing of them: and that indeed not without cause: for wee are by our nature very slacke vnto them.

*Theoph.* There is one thing behind, which I will demand of thee, ; namely, concerning that which was said of thee before, that the obedience which is vndertaken vpon hope of reward, is not acceptable vnto God.

*Mat.* This also is indeede true, if that affection raigne in vs as it doth in the vnfaithfull. Howbeit, it shall not hurt, so as the loue and feare of God go before, if we be allured and drawne on to his seruice, by the hope and looking for of the reward: And on the other side, bee kept and held from disobeying him, by the feare of the punishment, that is, of eternall death.

*Theoph.* But ought not the loue of God to be sufficient, to bring forth that obedience in the hearts of the faithfull, without borrowing any other spur from elsewhere?

*Mat.* If our regeneration were perfect, as is the regeneration of them which liue blessedly in heauen, wee should know God perfectly, whereby we should be stirred vp to obey him perfectly. But because there is alwaies behind in vs something not regenerated, which of it owne nature is in bondage, full of ignorance, without loue of God, it is necessary, that we should be stirred vp to that obedience, by the hope of reward: and on the other side, by feare of punishments be held backe and kept in obedience. Here-vpon it is, that God both rewardeth our good workes in this life, according to his promises, and also correcteth our slacknesse and insolency by diuers afflictions which hee sendeth daily: whereby it appeareth, that hee is true, as well in his promises, as in the execution of his threatnings. But seeing you haue nothing more to propound, I would aduise, that ye put off the rest of the disputation till another time, for I see that it is now almost noone.

*Theo.* I haue heard your discourse of good workes, as also

she

The vse of  
the doctrine  
of good  
workes.

the exposition of the morall law, with so great delight, that the time of our speech hath seemed to be very short.

*Mat.* Indcede it is a most pleasant thing to intreat of good workes, so as it be done holily, & by the rule of Gods word. Howbeit that shall be little, except the practise bee adioyned, which verily getteth prayse with men, comfort to the conscience, and profit with God. Therefore true & sound vertue is greatly commended before vaine prating, or the vnprofitable idle knowledge of it.

*Theoph.* I doe remember an excellent similitude, which I haue oftentimes heard of thee, & it is this. As a pretious garment shut vp in a chest, is altogether vnprofitable; but if it be put on, it is an honour, delight, and profit vnto vs: so it is with good workes: for, the knowledge & vaine discoursing of the is of no vse, except they be put in practise.

*Mat.* It is most true. Therefore I pray God, our heauenly Father, that as hee hath imprinted his Law in our mindes, so hee will engraue it together with his loue and feare in our hearts, by the power of his holy Spirit, that being alwaies cloathed with righteousnesse and true holines, we may worship him with due reuerence and humility, all our life: that so

1. He may be glorified of vs,
2. Our neighbour edified,
3. And our faith and saluation confirmed, through Iesus Christ our Lord.

*Theoph.* So be it.

## CHAP. II.

*Of Prayer: which hath the chiefe place among good workes, to testifie and confirme our faith.*

THEOPHILVS.

**O**ur helpe is in the name of the Lord, which hath made both heauen and earth.

*Mat.* So be it.

*Theoph.* Concerning the doctrine of good workes, I am sufficiently satisfied (most dearely beloued brother): for I haue learned, that they onely bee worthy the name of good workes, which God hath commanded in his Law: also,



also, that they be not the causes of our iustification and saluation: neuertheles, that they be profitable, both to the glory of God, and to the edification of our neighbours, and very much to the assurance of our saluation and faith.

Now I demand of you, which hath the first place among good workes?

*Mat.* True prayer, namely, that which is poured from which is the heart vnto God, with this confidence, that we shall be chiefly good heard.

*Theoph.* Why giuest thou it the chiefe place among good workes?

*Mat.* Because by the helpe of it wee obtaine this, that we be able to performe the other good workes. Moreover, it yeeldeth vs the greatest testimony of our saluation.

*Theoph.* Whence is it, that it yeeldeth a fuller testimony of our faith, than the other good workes?

*Mat.* From hence, namely, because prayer with a firmed hope of being heard; cannot be made, vntill we be persuaded of the loue and fauour of God towards vs. For as *PAUL* saith; How shall they call vpon him, in whom they haue not beleueed? For this cause the same *Apostle* affirmeth out of the Prophecie of *IOEL*; Whosoever shall call vpon the name of the Lord, shall be saued.

*Theoph.* But from whence haue we that assurance? seeing wee be guilty vnto our selues of our owne vnworthinesse by the which we deserue; that both we our selues, and our prayers, should be put backe from the seat of his Maiesty?

*Mat.* By the intercession or mediation of *Iesus Christ*, who (as it was shewed by vs in the Chapter of Faith) doth alwaies offer vp to God the Father the merit of his death, for full satisfaction of all our sinnes. Whereupon it cometh to passe, that he is made mercifull vnto vs, and such a one as will bee entreated of vs, so as we shall receive whatsoeuer we aske of him. And thit doth the Scripture teach in these words; Wee haue an aduocate with the Father, *Iesus Christ*.

*Theoph.* It followeth therefore, that the office of the Mediator, is by a most strait bond ioyned with the office of the Redeemer.

*Mat.* It is so, and therefore *IOHN*, after these words; We

M

have

1. Iohn. 3. 2

haue an aduocate with the Father, Iesus Christ the righteous, presently addeth, And he is the propitiation for our finnes. Hereupon it is, that PAUL ioyneth both the offices together, when he saith; There is one mediator of God and man, the man Christ Iesus, which gaue himselfe a ran-

1. Tim. 2. 5. 6

some for all men.

Theoph.

Seeing therefore,

one is our Redeemer,

euen

Christ Iesus,

it seemeth to follow,

that he alone can also

fulfill the office of the Mediator for vs with the Father.

Mat.

It followeth, and that indeed necessarily: and for

this cause, in the places which we haue heard; -we reade it

written; One aduocate, one mediator: for the word ONE,

is expressely added, to the end we might know, that besides

him alone, there can be no other.

Theoph.

Therefore they deale foolishly, and without any

good ground, whosoever seeke other patrons and mediators besides Christ.

Mat.

Very foolishly. For they forsake the Creator, to

goe to the creature: the Lord, to goe to the seruant: the

most dearly beloued Sonne of the Father, which is in the

highest authority &amp; fauour with him to pacifie his wrath,

to goe to those which lacke all things that bee required to

wash away finnes, and therefore bee vnable to make our

prayers acceptable &amp; of force. Moreouer, they do esteeme

Christ, as if he were not sufficient inough for the office of

the mediator, &amp; therefore deny him to be our true Sauiour:

For if he be fit and sufficient for so great an office, why do

they chuse to themselues other mediators beside him? If

they say, they doubt not but that he is both most powerful

and most fit for this thing, but doe doubt somewhat of his

will; they doe therein very much bewray themselues to be

vnbelievers, which refuse to giue credit vnto him, after

that he hath giuen vs so notable a pledge of his exceeding

loue: namely, when he vouchsafed both to take vpon him

our humane nature, and to suffer the death of the crosse for

our redemption. Adde hereunto, that most louingly hee

calleth vs vnto himselfe by his word, when he saith; Come

vnto me, all ye that labour and be laden, and I will cause

you to haue ease, and you shall find rest vnto your soules.

Finally, whither soever they turne themselues, they shall

neuer

neuer

neuer

neuer

neuer

neuer

netter escape, but be found iniurious against Christ, forasmuch as they take from him the office of the Mediatour, purchased by his own blood, to giue it to blessed creatures that be in heauen.

*Theoph.* They obiekt, that the office of Christ is not translated by them to the dead Saints, seeing they end all the prayers they make to God, with these words; Through Iesus Christ our Lord: Whereby they say is declared, that the chiefe honour is giuen to Christ himselfe.

*Mat.* It is a craft of Satan, by the which he would haue the wickednesse of praying to Saints to be hidden, and so the manifest wrong that they offer vnto Christ, which put ouer his office vnto Saints, while they pray God, that by their merits and intercession, he will grant the things that they desire; and at length adde, through Iesus Christ our Lord: Wherein they imitate and follow him, who after he hath giuen his Prince a blow, would humbly doe him reuerence.

*Theoph.* Is it therefore lawfull for the faithfull being alieue, mutually among themselves, the one to commend the saluation of the other vnto God by prayer? seeing it cannot be, but something is taken away from the intercession of Christ.

*Mat.* Not so: for many causes may be alleadged, for the which, the one is not onely unprofitable, but also forbidden; and therefore to be avoided: but the other not onely to be lawfull, but also profitable and necessary.

*Theoph.* Declare those causes.

*Mat.* I will make foure chiefe.

1. Because loue, that is so much commended vnto vs, is both cherished and increased by praying one for another. But this can haue no place in the dead, of whom **SALOMON** speaking saith; Both their loue, and their hatred and their enuie is now perished, and they haue no more portion for euer, in all that is done vnder the Sunne.

2. Because praying one for another, wee thinke not to be heard for his sake that prayeth for vs: which they doe that pray to the Saints departed, and by that meanes giue vnto them the office of Christ.

*Theoph.* But it may bee, that the same thing may befall

them, which desire to bee holpen with the prayers of the godly that be aliue: for why may not some thinke, that they shall be heard for their holines and good works sake?

*Mat.* I grant, it is not impossible that some should after that manner abuse the praers of the godly: but there is the least danger in this behalfe, if it be compared with the other. For, it cannot be in any, but the ignorant and vn-skilfull, for whose ignorance wee ought not to refuse that so holy an ordinance of God. But the intercession of departed Saints, doth bring with it most manifest danger: for no man can pray vnto them, but he thinketh for their sakes to obtain the things which he desireth of God. The prooffe whereof, are all the formes of prayers written by such as worshipped them.

*Theoph.* Goe forward, alleadge the third cause.

3. *Mat.* The faithfull that be aliue, may know the necessities one of another, and pray to God for them: which the faithfull departed cannot. I am not ignorant what they be wont to object, namely that the Saints departed doe, in God, as it were in a glasse, see all the things that be done in this world: but that is altogether to diuine or guesse, without testimony of Scripture.

*Theoph.* Declare the fourth cause.

4. *Mat.* That is the chiefe: namely, because the prayers of the godly being aliue, one for another, are grounded vpon the testimony of the word of God, also vpon examples and promises, by the which it is confirmed, that they shall not be in vaine; but the prayers of the dead are neither grounded vpon any testimony of Gods word, neither vpon promises nor examples.

*Theoph.* Say you so?

*Mat.* I say it: and therefore it is not done of faith; for the word of God is the onely foundation of it. Wherefore **PAVL** affirmeth, that whatsoeuer is not of faith is sin. And this reason is sufficient to ouerthrow the intercession of Saints departed. For who can endure this, that man should lift vp himselfe about God?

Rom 14. 23

*Theoph.* I do now confesse, that all the praers which are made to saints departed, for this end that they shold be our intercessors and mediators to God, are to be cast out and  
his sies

hissed at, and that Christ alone, whose office this is, is sufficient.

Why Christ  
onely suffi-  
ceth the  
faithfull to  
doe the office  
of the media-  
tor with the  
Father.

*Mat.* Yea truly, it is extreame madnesse for any to seeke to himselfe another mediator: forasmuch as he can doe it most perfectly, because he lacketh none of the things that suffice to pacifie God, and to cause him to be mercifull vnto vs. Moreouer, he loueth vs most dearly, and therefore is touched with pity vpon our infirmities. He knoweth our praier, presently when they be conceiued. Hee commandeth that wee should come vnto him, as often as wee will craue any thing at the hands of God.

Finally, he assureth vs, that we shall obtaine all the things which we shall aske in his name, when he saith, Verily, verily, I say vnto you, whatsoeuer yee shall aske of the Father in my name, he will giue it you. Hitherto haue ye asked nothing in my name: aske and you shall receiue. And in another place he saith: Whatsoeuer ye shall aske in my name, I will doe it.

Ioh. 16. 23.

Ioh. 14. 13.

*Theoph.* What meane these words, To aske any thing in the name of Christ?

*Mat.* It is to beseech God, to heare our praier, not indeed hauing respect to our vnworthinesse, but to the merit that is continually offered to him of Christ Iesus for vs. Therefore to aske any thing of God in the name of Christ, is answerable to his intercession with the Father for vs, & that more is; an approbation or allowance of it, and the way to be partakers of it.

*Theoph.* But ought the promise of Christ, wherein he assureth vs, that we shall receiue whatsoeuer wee aske in his name, to be extended to all things that shall come vnto our mindes, without putting any exception?

*Mat.* Not so: for our desires for the most part be euill: which if they were fulfilled, would bee to our destruction rather than to our profit. Therefore Christ vnderstandeth onely those things which concerne the glory of God, and our commoditie and saluation: all which things indeed he hath in few words comprehended in that forme of praier, which he hath giuen vs; namely, Our Father which art in heauen, &c.

*Theoph.* Must we therefore vse no other forme of praier?

*Mat.* If you respect the matter of substance, we may vse no other; but it is in our libertie to enlarge it: whereof the holy Scripture yeeldeth vs many examples, in those formes of praier which it setteth before vs; namely, the Psalmes: all which vndoubtedly bee referred to this forme appointed by Christ.

*The exposition of the Lords Praier.*

*Theoph.* Let vs examine the forme of praier that Christ hath deliuered: how many parts be there of it?

The summe  
and parts of  
the Lords  
praier.

*Mat.* In the begining it containeth a Preface, and afterward six petitions. The first three whereof doe immediately respect the glory of God. But the latter three containe those things that appertaine to our selues, both for the helpe of this life, and for euerlasting saluation. And they be therefore placed after those that concerne the glorie of God, to the end we might vnderstand, that the latter three be not rightly conceiued and made, vnlesse they bee referred to the glorie of God, as it were vnto their proper end, and that therefore they shall not be heard, according to the saying of the Apostle; You aske and receiue not, because you aske amisse, that you might consume it vpon your lusts.

1am.4.3.

*The Preface to the Lords Praier.*

Our Father which art in heauen.

*Theoph.* Let vs consider of the preface of the Lords praier.

*Mat.* It is contained in these words: Our Father which art in heauen.

*Theoph.* Who is that Father vnto whom Christ biddeth ys to flie?

*Mat.* It is the first person of the holy Trinity, namely, the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ.

*Theoph.* Is therefore one onely person of the Trinity to be praied vnto?

*Mat.* Wee must know, that in true praier wee are onely the instruments of God, who alone in that, as in other good works, worketh the things that concerne our saluation. But that is to be vnderstood of all the persons according to the distinct propriety of euey of them. For the ho-

ly



ly Ghost praieſt in vs, as appeareth by the ſaying of the <sup>Rom. 8. 17.</sup> Apoſtle; The ſpirit maketh requeſt for the Saints according to the will of God. The Sonne offereth our praier to the Father. This praier the Father receiueth, and louingly heareth. Therefore, lawfull and true praier is that which is made from the heart, the holy Ghost ſtirring vs vp, which alſo is directed to the Father in the name of Ieſus Chriſt his Sonne. Indeed we haue an example in the holy Scriptures of a certaine praier made to the Sonne, in the which this diſtinction of the perſons is not obſerued: namely in that which STEVEN made while he was ſtoned: Lord Ieſus receiue my ſpirit. Howbeit this example, and if <sup>Act. 7. 55.</sup> there be any ſuch other, is not contrary to the rule of right praying. But becauſe wee haue begun the expoſition of the Lords praier, wee are to returne to the iſſue of the ſpeech we haue in hand: and it is this, that in this place we be taught that our praiers muſt bee directed to the Father: which PAUL teſtifieth that himſelfe did, in theſe words: I <sup>Eph. 3. 14.</sup> bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. We may alſo pray vnto Chriſt, not onely as he is God, but alſo as he is the Mediator, that is, as he is one perſon conſiſting of two natures: yet ſo, as the Diety be the obieſt or the thing which wee ſet before our eies in praying. Likewiſe alſo we may pray to the holy Ghost, diſtinguiſhed from the other perſons, who with the Father and the Sonne is very God. And indeed the godly that exerciſe themſelues in ſuch praiers, doe a thing profitable and worthy to bee done, ſo as they be not diſtracted with the deepe meditation of the diſtinction of the three perſons, but alwaies haue their minds fixed and ſetled vpon the vniſity of the eſſence. This alſo is to be obſerued, that the name of God, & of father, is not ſeldome in the Scripture referred to each of the perſons. And let theſe things be ſpoken by the way. For it is not my purpoſe at this time, to declare all things particularly that appertaine vnto this place.

*Theoph.* But why doth Chriſt command vs, that comming to his Father, we ſhould cal him by the name of our Father?

*Mat.* Not onely that we ſhould gather, ſeeing hee is the Father of Chriſt, that he is alſo our Father: but eſpecially for three cauſes.

**M** 1. Firſt,

*Math. 7.9.16.*  
1 First, that we may call vpon him with true faith, that is, that we may beleue that he which is our father will not deny vs the things which wee shall aske of him, according to that saying of Christ; What man is there of you, who if his sonne shall aske bread of him, will giue him a stone; and if he shall aske fish, will giue him a serpent?

2 Another cause is, that we might vnderstand (which hath beene already said of vs) that we ought not to draw neere vnto God, but in the name of his naturall Sonne Iesus Christ. For in him alone we are adopted and made his children.

3 The third, when we are commanded to call him our father in common, rather then particularly and properly, my father, we be taught, that true charitie and brotherly loue towards our neighbours is required of vs in praier, forasmuch as we be all the children of the same father, and heires of one and the selfe same inheritance. Whosoever therefore make not their praiers to God in the name of Iesus Christ, or do carry priuy hatred or enmity against their brethren, cannot pray to God with this forme of praier.

*Theoph.* Why hath Christ added these words; Which art in heauen?

*Mat.* Not to signifie that his Maiestie is shut vp within heauen: which indeede (seeing it is infinite) the whole world is not able to containe: But

*Math. 7.11.*  
1 That he may be distinguished from our earthly fathers, and that withall wee might vnderstand how much better he is then they, and more able to helpe vs. Therefore Christ said to his Disciples; If ye therefore which are euil, can giue good gifts to your children, how much more wil your father that is in heauen giue good things to them that aske them of him?

2 Secondly, those words are added, that comming to God, wee should lift vp our minds aboue all earthly and transitory things, how beautifull or goodly soeuer.

3 Finally, that we might earnestly and indeede acknowledge the incomprehensible greatnesse, the marvellous wisdom, and infinite power of him, whom we pray vnto: which verily doe farre more clearly shine in the heauens, then in the earth, to the end wee might worship him with  
the

*The second Booke.*

179

the more teuerence, and rest vpon him with greater trust  
and assurance.

*The second Petition.*

Hallowed be thy name.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the three petitions that respect  
the glorie of God. Which is the first of them?

*Mat.* It is contained in these words; Hallowed be thy  
name.

*Theoph.* What is the meaning of it?

*Mat.* We desire of God, that the knowledge of him may  
be spread abroad throughout the whole world; that so his  
name may be sanctified, that is, that all men may giue him  
his due honor.

*Theoph.* Wherefore makest thou mention of the know-  
ledge of God, which Christ mentioneth not in this peti-  
tion?

*Mat.* Because God cannot be truly hallowed and wor-  
shipped, except the knowledge of him goe before. For wee  
cannot worship nor praise him, of whom we be ignorant,  
and whose excellency and power are vnknowne to vs.  
Hence is that saying of the Prophet; According to thy  
name (O God) so is thy praise vnto the worlds end.

*Theoph.* Is not this hallowing of the name of God, the same  
with that whereof thou speakest in the exposition of the  
third commandment?

*Mat.* The very same; and therefore the exposition of  
that commandment, may be in stead of an exposition to  
this petition, and shew how the name of God is to be hal-  
lowed.

*The second Petition.*

The kingdome come.

*Theoph.* Let vs passe ouer to the second petition.

*Mat.* It is this; Thy kingdome come. Nowe in we de-  
sire of God, that by the knowledge of his Maiestie being  
giuen vnto men, he will cause all to be gathered into the  
Church. For in it he reigneth by the scepter of his word,  
and by the power of his Spirit.

*Theoph.* That I may the more easily come to the true  
meaning

The exposi-  
on of the first  
petition.

Psal. 48. 10.

The exposi-  
on of the se-  
cond peti-  
on.

meaning of this petition, I do first demand of thee wherefore that rule and dominion which God exerciseth ouer his Church, is called his kingdome: after I will aske thee, concerning the word COME.

Of the kingdome of God

*Mat.* That rule is called by the name of kingdome, for the likenesse it hath with earthly kingdomes.

*Theoph.* Wherein standeth that likenesse?

*Mat.* In foure heads or principall points, namely because in the Church there be

1 One King.

2 Subiects.

3 Lawes.

4 Governours: who, as in earthly kingdomes, haue the charge to see to the keeping of those lawes. For, in the Church there is one king, namely Iesus Christ, who by his Father is appointed Lord ouer it, to rule and gouerne it; which is confirmed by the words of the Angell to MARY: The Lord God will giue vnto him the seate of his Father DAVID, & he shal raigne ouer the house of IACOB for euer, and there shall be no end of his kingdome. Therefore the kingdome of God and the kingdome of Christ, is one and the selfe same. The faithfull be the people of his kingdome, whom Christ hath redeemed with his death, and set free from the tyranny of the diuell, that he might deliuer them vp to his owne kingdome, to become his subiects. The lawes of it are the word of God, wherein all things bee commanded and declared, that appertaine either to the humble seruice and obedience of that king, or to the concord of the Citizens and subiects. The officers which are specially occupied about this kingdome, are the Ministers of the word, or Pastors: vpon whom this charge is laide, that they preach the word, and see to the keeping of those lawes. Who also (as the Apostle speaketh) haue in readinesse reuenge against all disobedience,

2. COR. 10. 6.

*Theoph.* I haue heard of the likenesse betweene the kingdome of God and the kingdome of men: now I desire to vnderstand wherein they differ.

*Mat.* First, all the things in the kingdome of God are spirituall: namely, the king himselfe, his glory, power, subiects, lawes, rewards, punishments of the rebels. Therefore Christ

Christ said vnto Pilate; my kingdom is not of this world. *Ioh. 18. 36.*

2 Secondly, Christ requireth no such thing of his subiects, as earthly kings are wont to aske: but contrariwise doth continually enrich them with his owne gifts, and spirituall riches.

3 Thirdly, he maketh them all partakers of his kingly dignitie, which earthly kings cannot doe.

4 Fourthly hee doth not onely command, as other kings do, but giueth his owne Spirit, which putteth power into vs, whereby we are made able to yeeld our humble and dutifull obedience vnto his commandements.

Finally, all their kingdomes bee subiect vnto alteration and change, but this kingdome is inuincible, and shall endure vntill the last comming of Christ.

Such is the kingdome of God and of Christ, which in deed (as hath bin said) is not to be referred but to that rule which he exerciseth ouer his beloued children, and those that be receiued into the Church.

*Theoph.* Who therefore hath the rule ouer the vnbeleeuers and wicked?

*Mat.* The diuell: and for this cause, hee is called the Prince of this world; yet notwithstanding the Lord hath the chiefe rule and power, both ouer the vnbeleeuers, and ouer their captaine, which by his iust iudgement hath made them subiects to that vnbeleeuing tyrant: to the end they may be vexed & tormented of him according to their deserts, forasmuch as they haue refused to obey Christ, who is a most louing & mercifull king. Moreouer, that kingdom of Sathan hath immortall hatred against the kingdome of Christ; the head (I say) of that kingdom namely, Sathan and his souldiers, whom he stirreth vp to make outward warre against the kingdome of Christ, while hee in the meane time assaulteth it within. For both of them labour and strue with all their might, to spoile & sacke that kingdome of Christ. But they doe it in vaine: for, how much the more furiously they seeke to ouerthrow it, so much the more do they helpe it forward: and at length pull vpon themselves vtter ruine and destruction.

The kingdome of Sathan.

*Theoph.* We haue beene long enough in the exposition of the kingdome of God: let vs goe forward to the other member

How the  
kingdome of  
God com-  
meth,

member. What meaneth that word; Let it come, or let it approach?

*Mat.* The office of a good king standeth in two speciall things;

1- First, to rule his subiects (that is to say, such as are loyall and obedient) to keepe them in peace, defend, deale mercifull and louingly with them, and to redeeme them if they be taken captiues.

2 Secondly, to punish the rebels, and to destroy and throw downe the enemies of his kingdome. When therefore we desire of God that his kingdome may come, wee doe as if we praied, that he would increase the number of belecuers, enlarge his Church euery daie, more and more heape vpon vs his gifts, and settle it with right order: and contrariwise, that he would cut off all the enemies of it, ouerthrow their counsels, destroy their purposes, and that the defending of the Church may be euery day increased, till at length it come to the highest perfection. Howbeit, that shall not bee before the day of iudgement: at which time all his enemies being overcome, hee shall make them his footstool. And then (as the Apostle saith) he shall deliuer vp the kingdome to God the Father, that is he shall raigne quietly without any rebellion and resistance, and wee shall liue peaceably in him, being deliuered from all feare and trouble of enemies.

1 Cor. 15. 24

### *The third Petition.*

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heauen.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the third petition, being the last of them that respect the glory of God.

*Mat.* It is this; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen. Wherein indeed we doe not simply desire of God, that his will may be done, the fulfilling whereof there is verily nothing that can let: but that he will so guide vs with his spirit, that we may be ready to do his will, reuealed vnto vs in his word, & that with no lesse desire than the heavenly Angels do. But concerning his secret will; we desire that if when it be done, any aduersities befall vs, namely losse of goods, hinderance, afflictions, whether they concerne the soule or the body, we may beare them all patiently as sent from



from his hand, and so obey his will, that ours may wholly and altogether giue place vnto it.

*Theoph.* Indeed hee were happy, that after this manner should conformance himselfe to the will of God.

*Mat.* Yea surely, because he might worthily glory in this, that God did nothing but that which hee would, seeing that he would no other thing, but that which were acceptable and pleasing to God. And assuredly there bee many things that call vs vnto that. For, if God our heavenly Father be wiser than we (which all men doe confesse) it is not to be doubted, but hee knoweth what wee haue neede of, better than our selues; and that therefore by good right, we ought to prefeire his holy and good will before our owne, which is wicked and corrupt; yea rather often like vnto children, wee know not what wee would haue. For many times we change our purposes, and forthwith or a little after, we disallow that, which a little before we very greatly allowed of. For this cause the Lord, without any respect of our will and intents, as a good father, sendeth those things, which he knoweth to be necessary, both for his owne glory, and for our profit and saluation, which indeed are to be receiued with a quiet and thankfull mind as from his hand, vnlesse wee meane to be miserable for euer: which we shall neuer escape, so long as we cleaue to our owne will.

Of Christian  
patience.

*Theo.* I haue long since laboured to performe this, but as yet I haue not attained it: but especially, I finde by experience, that the vse of this doctrine is most hard when any great trouble commeth, whether it be of body or minde.

*Mat.* It is not onely hard, but verily cannot bee generally brought to practise, especially if respect be had of our owne flesh, which maruellously pleaseth it selfe in it owne will and affections, and seeketh for nothing else but delights and pleasures. For this cause, in this place Christ teacheth vs to desire it of his Father: but *JAMES* assureth, *1am. 1. 5* that we shall receiue it, so as we aske it in faith; If any of you lacke wisdom, let him aske it of God, which giueth it liberally vnto all, and casteth no man in the teeth, and it shall be giuen vnto him. But let him aske in faith, not doubting.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* In that place *Iames* speaketh of wisdom, but we speake of patience.

*Mat.* There is no doubt, but by the word wisdom he vnderstandeth patience, wherevnto hee had exhorted the faithful in the former verse, in these words; Let patience haue her perfect worke, that you may be perfect and entire, so as nothing be wanting.

But because wee cannot doe it of our selues, heere hee sheweth by what meanes wee haue it from God; when he saith; If any man lacke wisdom, let him aske it of God, which giveth it to all men liberally.

*Theoph.* But what is the cause, that he calleth patience by the name of wisdom?

*Mat.* To the end wee might vnderstand, that a mans chiefe wisdom standeth heerein, that in his aduersities and troubles, hee patiently submit himselfe to the will of God; but on the contrary side, that it is the extreamest foolishnesse and madnesse, If any dare resist and set himselfe against it. For what good doth he by it? Can he change the will of God? No verily. Nay rather, he maketh his own case worse, as well with inward griefe that tormenteth him, as also because hee pulleth the wrath of God vpon himselfe. For by our stubbornnesse he is compelled to lay more grievous punishments vpon vs. On the other side, by our patience, he is mooued vnto pittie, so as he turneth our afflictions into kindnes, and doing vs good; euen as good parents are wont, when they perceiue that their children be brought into good order by their corrections.

*Theoph.* I see it is a thing profitable and necessary: howbeit, I thinke that the meditation of the things which thou declarest (when we spake of afflictions) do make not a little for this purpose.

*Mat.* Thou iudget rightly. For in that place we deliuered many things which may worke exceeding great comfort in the hearts of the faithfull. Neuerthelesse, I will adde vnto them two other besides, as an ouerplus.

1. First, when wee bee ouerladen with afflictions, the euils which we suffer are not so much to be considered as those which we haue deserued, and yet notwithstanding be not laid vpon vs. Furthermore, wee must thinke  
vpon

upon the good things which the Lord heaped upon vs, on the other side : and so indeed we shall finde, that God dealeth most mercifully euen in the middelt of our afflictions, if they bee examined according to the greatnesse of our finnes.

2. Secondly, that we are not to looke upon them onely who in outward shew be a little happier, than wee, and whome wee see to bee exempted from the troubles where-with we are grieued; but upon infinite and innumerable others, which are in farre greater miseries, than are those that we suffer, whose finnes notwithstanding are not so great as ours.

*Theoph.* I doe very much reioyce that I haue heard these two things : for I will daily make vse of them, as occasion shall serue.

*Mat.* Thou speakest wisely, when thou addest the word DAILY. For the Lord our master, that we should not forget this doctrine so profitable, is wont oftentimes to beate it into our heads, by sending of troubles, wherein wee might practise it. And verily, wee ought to be well acquainted with it, seeing we are so often exercised in it.

*Theoph.* But I for my part doe find it true by daily experience, that I am very little exercised in it. Neuertheless I hope, that by the grace of God, I shall profit better in it than heretofore I haue done : especially, seeing now I know the way how I may doe it, namely, to craue it of God by daily prayers, and continually to haue in minde the things which thou hast said. But now, forasmuch as I haue heard the meaning of this third Petition, which is the last of those that concerne the glory of God, let vs goe forward to the rest. But before I come to the three following which concerne our owne good and saluation, I would haue thee to declare the order of these petitions; and withall, how fitly they be ioyned together.

*Mat.* These former agree together most excellently, for as much as they be of the same kind. For, after that we are made partakers of the knowledge of God, by the which we are moued to enter into his kingdome; that is, into his Church, it is meete & conuenient, that we should desire to bee informed and taught the obedience of his will,

amandant  
floridato  
dignos  
am

in  
ad  
dignos  
ad

The cohe-  
rence and  
summe of the  
three former  
petitions of  
the Lords  
prayer.  
where-

whereunto the ministry of the Church calleth vs dayly.

Finally, in these three petitions, wee desire of God to giue vs such knowledge of his Maiesty, as they may willingly submit themselues to his kingdome and rule, and from their hearts obey his pleasure; that so he may be glorified of them and in them.

*The fourth Petition.*

**Giue vs this day our daily bread.**

*Theoph.* Wee are come to the three last petitions of the Lords Prayer, wherein we say those things are contained which concerne both our soule and body.

*Mat.* True: for the first of them comprehendeth the things that be necessary to the passing thorow or finishing of this life: but the other two, those that appertain to our saluation.

*Theoph.* Recite therefore the first.

*Mat.* Giue vs this day our daily bread.

*Theoph.* What is the meaning of it?

*Mat.* To the end we may leaue God according to our calling; in this petition we desire of him, to giue vs our daily bread, that is, that euery day he would minister vnto vs those things that bee necessary for this life: for all those bee comprehended vnder the name of bread, as being a thing most necessary. Howbeit, this is to be noted, that (while we aske of God our daily bread) we doe also desire such things as he requisite and necessary that wee may eate it in peace and quietnesse.

Therefore this petition generally containeth whatsoever can be desired for our peaceable, calme, vndistressed, and good estate in this world. Neuerthelesse, wee ought to depend and hang vpon the pleasure of our heavenly Father. For hee will giue vs such things as hee shall know to bee for the furtherance of his owne glorie, and our saluation. And hereupon it may bee gathered, why he would haue vs to aske bread onely: namely: that wee might know, that bread ought to suffice vs, if the Lord shall see it good, to giue vs no other thing to nourish vs.

*Theoph.* There doe siue principall points come into my minde,

The summe  
of the last  
three peti-  
tions.

The exposi-  
tion of the  
fourth peti-  
tion.

inside, concerning this thy exposition of daily bread, wherof I will aske thee.

The first wherof is this, why wee pray to haue daily bread giuen vs? seeing we are commâded to prouide vs, by our honest labor, such things as be necessary for this life.

*Mat.* Because our labour shall be to no purpose, except the blessing of God be added vnto it; euen as the Psalmist expressly teacheth.

*Theoph.* Wherefore are wee commanded to craue that bread which we call *our*?

*Mat.* The word *our* was added for two causes. The first, that we might vnderstand, that that bread is promised of God; and therefore by good right called *ours*; and hereby we might be assured, that it cannot be denied vs. The other, to the end we might remember, that that bread is to be prouided by lawfull meanes and wayes; and such as be allowed of God; but not by theft or deceit. For otherwise, wee eat not our owne bread, but another mans; receiued, not from God, but from the Diuell.

*Theoph.* The third point followeth: why are these words added; This day, and Daily?

*Mat.* That we might altogether and wholly depend vpon the prouidence of God, so as we should not be carefull for things to come, as if wee did distrust; but be content with those that be necessary for our present need, with this hope, that the Lord will prouide for the morrow.

*Theoph.* I come to the fourth point: How well agreeth it, that they which haue plenty of things, and whose barns and store-houses be full, should aske their daily bread?

*Mat.* Because we must hold it for a certainty and truth, that bread of it selfe cannot nourish, except the blessing of God be added. For sometimes rich men are seene worne and pined away with leanness: For this cause MOSES saith; Man liueth not by bread onely, but by euery word that commeth out of the mouth of God. In which words, the Prophet doth also signifie this, that the power of God doth not so cleaue vnto bread, that hee cannot nourish vs without it, as oft as shall please him. Whereof he gaue the Israelites a singular prooffe, whom he led in the wilderness by the space of forty yeares, without bread.

N

Theoph.

*Theoph.* The last point is behinde. Why doth Christ command vs to pray for bread in common, in these words: Giue vs our bread; rather than priuaty, after this manner; Giue me my bread?

*Mat.* To the end we might know, that we are to pray for it, not for our selues alone, but also for our neighbors, of whose profit and commodity, Christian charity requirereth, that we should be no lesse carefull than of our owne.

Moreover, by this manner of praying, we are more and more assured, that wee shall obtaine the bread which we pray for; forasmuch as the whole Church doth not onely craue it with vs, but also for vs: euen as we also doe craue the same both with it and for it. For we are all the sonnes of one and the same Father euen as we are taught in the beginning of this prayer, while we say in common; Our Father. For the same cause also, the two petitions following be deliuered in the same forme of words: namely, Forgiue vs our trespasses, and leade vs not into temptation: And they containe all the things that appertaine to the heavenly life, euen as this containeth those which bee necessary for this present life.

*Theoph.* Wherefore are the things that concerne our saluation, contained in two petitions?

*Mat.* Because our saluation standeth vpon two parts: The first, that wee be reconciled vnto God; and this we desire in the first petition, which intreateth of the forgiveness of our sinnes. The other, that being reconciled vnto him by the forgiveness of sins, we be kept in his loue and obedience, so as we obey him, being mindfull of that infinite benefit which he hath bestowed vpon vs.

### *The fifth Petition.*

Forgiue vs our trespasses, as wee forgiue them that trespass against vs.

*Theoph.* The two last petitions doe remaine to be considered of vs. Let vs therefore come to the fifth.

What is the meaning of it?

*Mat.* Because wee be all miserable sinners, by reason whereof the Lord is iustly angry with vs, yea rather, is so long angry, as our sinnes shall be imputed and laid to our charge



charge before him; in this petition wee pray, that for his infinite mercies sake hee will forgiue them all; to the end that for the time to come he may fauour vs, being at one with vs, namely, by the forgiueneſſe of our finnes.

*Theoph.* But why doe we craue of God to forgiue vs our finnes, for the which Chriſt hath moſt fully ſatiſfied: ſeeing there is no place for forgiueneſſe, where ſatiſfaction is made?

*Mat.* If the ſatiſfaction were of our ſelues, this were indeed true: but ſeeing it is by Chriſt, which is freely giuen vs of his Father, forgiueneſſe agreeth neceſſarily with it: and verily it is as a man condemned in ſome ſumme of mony were to be caſt into priſon, vntill he had payed the whole ſum, and yet were not able to doe it. Whom if the Prince meant to pleaſure without any hinderance of the Law, & ſhould freely giue him that, wherein he was to haue been fined, ſhould he not haue done as much, as if he had forgiuen the offence? He ſhould indeed. And this ſimilitude is moſt fit: Forasmuch as in this petition, our ſins be called debts, to the end wee might vnderſtand, that by them wee are no leſſe debtors vnto God, than if a man were in great debt vnto another, and yet had not wherewith to pay any thing at all. With this ſimilitude agreeth alſo that, that is written of *Paul*; Putting out the hand-writing that was againſt vs, which was contrary vnto vs, he euen tooke it away, and faſtned it vpon the croſſe. In which words he teacheth, that Chriſt hath moſt fully ſatiſfied for our finnes. Col. 2. 14

*Theo.* The more diligently I conſider the myſtery of our redemption, ſo much the more commeth to my remembrance, the infinite maruellous wiſedom of God, which by a way altogether wonderful, hath knit or ioyned together his perfect iuſtice with his perfect mercy, and that atwell to his owne glory, as to our ſaluation and benefite.

*Mat.* True indeed. But if thou do with a little more diligence marke that way, thou ſhalt find three things which the reaſon of man could neuer haue deuifed, & which out of Chriſt are found no where elſe, for the auoiding of the puniſhment due for our finnes: and they be theſe: That we ſhould our ſelues pay our debts vnto God: or els ſeek another, which is both able to pay them, and doe alſo ac-

quit vs of them : or that God himselfe should forgie vs whatfoeuer we be indebted vnto him.

*Theoph.* I would haue you declare these things a little more largely.

Rom. 11, 33

*Mat.* First therefore I will shew, that these three cannot any where be found, sauing in Christ. And verily whatfoeuer man can imagine, they shall neuer finde themselves wherewith to satisfie God. Who also (as the Apostle saith) hath shut all vnder sinne, that hee might haue mercie vpon all.

Neither shall they finde any creature in heauen or in earth sufficient to doe this office. But if they flie vnto God his mercy, to obtaine forgiuenesse of their sins, his perfect iustice will be a let, which requireth to be fully satisfied.

*Theo.* Let vs now see, how God hath ioyned these three things together in Christ, to reconcile his exceeding great mercy with his most perfect righteousnesse, vnto our salvation.

1. P. Ct. 2. 24

*Mat.* Becing made one with Christ by faith, and therefore also partakers of that which is his, wee our selues pay al our debts vnto God, & that out of the riches of Christ; which are, truly made ours. And by this meanes, the perfect iustice of God is fully satisfied, which indeede requireth this, that hee which oweth the debt should pay it. Neuerthelesse another hath paid it for vs, namely Christ, who alone hath drunke of the cup of his wrath, and (as the Apostle saith) hath borne our sins in his body vpon the tree. And therein most manifestly appeareth the great mercy of God, that gaue his most dearly beloued Sonne, for vs his enemies, vnto a most shamefull death.

Finally, because hee that hath satisfied the heauenly Father for vs, is his dearly beloued Son, and euerlasting God with the Father, freely giuen vnto vs; the continuall forgiuenesse of sinnes, (as hath beene said) is ioyned with his satisfaction, and that doth especially make stedfast and sure his immeasurable mercy.

*Theoph.* Verily a notable discourse, and very full of comfort. Let vs now returne to the exposition of our petition: Why is this clause added in the end. As wee forgie them that trespasse against vs?

*Mat.*

*Mat.* That is, according to the promise made vs of the forgiuenesse of our sinnes, vpon this condition, that wee forgiue them that hurt vs. And Christ would haue it expressly mentioned, because hee knew how hardly wee forgiue others their trespasses. Therefore in this clause he calleth vs to remember that wee shall not obtaine forgiuenes of our sinnes at the hands of God, except we also forgiue our neighbors their offences. Hereupon is that threatening of God by the Prophet against the Israelites; When you shall stretch out your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you, although you make many prayers I will not heare you; for *Esa. 1. 15* your hands are full of blood.

*Theoph.* Therefore this manner of speech doth not note an equality; as if God forgave vs so much onely as we shall forgiue.

*Mat.* No not so. For, our forgiuenesse, euen as wee our selues be imperfect, is alwaies imperfect, and saoureth of the vncleanesse of our flesh: whercupon it commeth to passe, that euen in them that are most regenerated, notwithstanding they doe vnfeignedly forgiue as God requirerh, & desire no reuenge, yea rather be ready to doe good vnto such as haue hurt them, and doe daily pray for them: yet there remaineth some bitternesse, so as we do not embrace them with that affection of heart, which wee would haue embraced them with, if wee had alwaies bene well pleased with them: which if God should doe, wee were in very ill case.

Therefore this is the meaning of this petition; O Lord according to thy promise forgiue vs our sinnes fully and perfectly, as a most perfect God: seeing that we being most imperfect men, according to thy commandement haue forgiuen them that haue hurt vs.

*Theoph.* In what place are this commandement and promise?

*Mat.* They be presently added by Christ after this prayer in these words; If you forgiue men their offences, your heavenly Father wil also forgiue you: But if you shall not forgiue men their offences, neither will your father forgiue you your offences. *Mat. 6. 14*

*Theoph.* I grant it is very right, that we should doe those things

things to our neighbours, which wee desire to be done to our selues; and so that God doth most worthily deny them forgiveness, that will not forgive their neighbours.

Mark. 11. 23.

*Mat.* True: especially seeing our sinnes against God, whereof wee craue pardon, are farre more grievous, and farre more in number then are they which our neighbours can euer commit against vs. And this doth Christ plainly teach in an excellent parable, when he saith: The Kingdome of heauen is like vnto a King, which would demand an account of his seruants: and when he began to reckon, there was one brought vnto him which ought ten thousand talents. And when he was not able to pay it, his Lord commanded him to bee sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and the debt to be paid. The seruant therefore fell downe and besought him, saying; Master, appease thine anger toward me; and I will pay thee all. Then that seruant Master had compassion vpon him, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt: but when the seruant was departed, he found one of his fellows that ought him an hundred pence, and he laid hands vpon him, and tooke him by the throat, saying: Pay me that thou owest. Then his fellow fell downe at his feet, and besought him, saying, Appease thine anger toward mee, and I will pay thee all: yet he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. And when his other fellows saw what was done, they were very sory, and came and declared vnto their Master all that was done. Then his Master called him, and said vnto him: O euil seruant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou praiedst me: oughtest thou not also to haue had pittie vpon thy fellow, euen as I had pittie on thee? So his Master was wroth, and deliuered him vnto the Tailers, till he should pay all that was due vnto him. So likewise (saith Christ) shall mine heauenly Father do vnto you, except ye forgive from your hearts each one to his brother their trespasses.

### *The sixth Petition.*

And leade vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill.

*Theoph.* The last petition is behind.

*Mat.*

*Mat.* Having obtained forgiveness of sins, we desire of the Lord to be present with vs, that we fall not againe into them, when we say, *Leade vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill.* For, this we pray, that he wil not giue vs ouer vnto the power of the diuell, to be overcome of him in temptation as we haue deserued; but contrariwise, that he would strengthen vs against the assaults and deadly subtilties of so great an enemy, that so daily more and more we may endeavour to amend our liues and obey him.

The exposition of the last petition.

*Theoph.* When therefore God leadeth men into temptation, doth he not stirre them vp to euill?

*Mat.* Not so. For that is altogether vnworthy of his Maiestie, and is contrary to his diuine nature.

For this cause *James* saith; Let no man when he is tempted, say he is tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with euill, neither doth hee tempt any man. But euery one is tempted, while he is drawne aside and snared of his owne concupiscence.

*Iam. 1. 13.*

Therefore as God in mercy defendeth the faithfull, and suffereth them not to be deceiued or mastered of the diuell, so as to bee overcome of sinne: so on the contrary side, such as he meaneth to punish, he deliuereth ouer to the diuell as to a tormentor, to be overcome and vanquished of him in temptation. In which sense the Apostle saith, that they which glorifie not God, are giuen vp to the lusts of their owne hearts. Which neuertheless hee doth without any allowance of sinne, as hath bene said in his place.

*Rom. 1. 24.*

*Theoph.* So far as I see, God punnisheth sins with sinnes.

*Mat.* Yea verily: but by a way diuers from that whereof I spake, when wee entreated of afflictions: in which place we said, that God sometimes stirreth vp one, who committeth that sinne against vs, which we our selues had committed against another: an example whereof we haue in *David*. He had defiled the wife of *Uriah*: the Lord raised vp his son *Absolon*, to defile his fathers concubines. But of all the temptations which are sent of God, that is the most grievous, when God deliuered men vp to the diuell to be overcome of him in temptation. For then he giueth them ouer into a reprobate sense, that when they haue heaped sinnes vpon sinnes, they may at length run headlong into

eternal destruction, except the Lord (which sometimes he doth) by his mighty hand stay the course of that downfall.

*Theoph.* What meaneth the conclusion added to this praier? For thine is the kingdome, the power and glory, for euer and euer. Amen.

The exposition  
of the con-  
clusion,

*Mat.* It containeth the cause for which wee craue all the former things, namely, for that they concerne his kingdome, power, and glory. For, by the first three, his kingdome is made manifest: and by the last three his power is exercised; whereupon followeth the increase of his glory. Therefore this conclusion is added, that we may with more boldnes come vnto God, and craue of him the things wee haue spoken of, who onely is able to giue them to vs: and that with greater assurance wee might beleue that we shall obtaine them; forasmuch as while he bestoweth them vpon vs, hee declareth himselfe to bee a most mightie king, whereupon ensueth his owne glorifying.

*Theoph.* I cannot sufficiently maruell at this abridgement or breuiarie of praier, also the two former, namely of faith and the law; seeing that in so few words, and in so exact order, they containe such hard things, and so excellent doctrine.

*Mat.* Thou doest indeede not without cause maruell at them. For in them shineth the wonderfull wisdom of God, and they doe very well agree together among themselves, in that order wherein wee haue propounded them. For faith teacheth vs all things that are to bee beleueed vnto our saluation: and I set it in the first place, as it were the foundation of the rest. But the law concerning all things that be required to the yeelding of obedience vnto God, followeth in most excellent order, as the fruite & witnesse of faith. Finally in the last place commeth praier, because of our selues we can neither beleue, nor doe any thing that is pleasing vnto God; by the which we bee taught by what meanes wee may obtaine both at his hands. And in these is contained the summe of all Christian doctrine.

*Theoph.* Before I goe to any other thing, I will propound two questions concerning the doctrine of praier.

1 First, praier seemeth to be vnprofitable, seeing wee can by it obtain nothing at the hands of God, besides that which

Faith.

The Law.

Praier.



which hee hath already determined in his vchangeable providence to giue vs: neither doth he cease to giue it, although we pray not.

2 Secondly, it seemeth superfluous, that wee should pray vnto God, to shew him what things wee haue neede of, forasmuch as he knoweth them better then our selues. Now it is thy part to answer to the former, which concerneth the providence of God.

*Mat.* They be much deceiued who for this cause ab-  
 staine from praier. For the providence of God taketh not  
 away second causes, such as praier is; yea rather it doth sta-  
 blish and strengthen them: for God vseth them as instru-  
 ments for the performance of that which he had appointed  
 before. But I remember a story, which if I bee not decei-  
 ued, will bring light vnto this question. A certaine Noble  
 man well furnished with horses and armour, went to war;  
 and it fell out that hee tooke his iourney by the house of a  
 very faithfull Pastour of the Church knowen to him long  
 before. This man very earnestly admonished him to bee  
 diligent in praier, by the which he might moue the Lord  
 to prosper his enterprises. Hee straightway reasoneth con-  
 cerning the providence of God, as if hee should haue said,  
 that God had already determined of all things that should  
 come to passe: and therefore that his decree could not bee  
 changed by his praiers. That good Minister answered, I  
 would therefore aduise thee to send away thy horses and  
 thy armour, as things vnprofitable, forasmuch as the issue  
 of warre dependeth vpon the providence of God, so as  
 no other thing can come to passe, besides that which hee  
 hath determined. The souldier answered, that such as  
 went to warre could not without rashnesse lay aside their  
 armour, because they were instruments by the which God  
 is wont to giue the victory to such as it seemed good vnto  
 him. The same also might I say of praier (saith the Mini-  
 ster) by the which the Lord vseth to giue vs the things that  
 be necessary, as well for the vse of this life, as for euerla-  
 sting saluation; and therefore that it was no lesse rash-  
 nesse, to neglect it vnder the pretence of Gods provi-  
 dence, especially seeing it is in so many places commen-  
 ded of God, with innumerable promises made vnto them  
 that

Whether the  
 providence  
 of God  
 should keepe  
 vs from praier

that doe often excercise themselues in it: and the Sonne of God himselfe hath giuen vs an example thereof, who also doth command that wee should pray without ceasing. By the which answer that Noble man was not a little edified.

*Theoph.* I may confesse the same of my selfe Furthermore I doe acknowledge, that hitherto I did neuer know the answer to this question so cleerely, as I haue vnderstood it by this comparison of armor, which indeed I thinke most fit to bring light vnto this doubt. And verily in the meane time it doth not a little agree vnto praier. For praier is vnto vs in stead of spirituall weapons, by the which wee may fight against & ouercome our spirituall enemies, the diuell, the flesh, and sin. Hitherto is referred the saying of *Paul*, I beseech you brethren, for our Lord Iesus Christs sake, and the loue of the Spirit, that yee would strue with me by your praiers to God for me. Moreover, this reason ought to take place in all the affaires of men: the euent and issue whereof, notwithstanding it depend and hang vpon Gods prouidence, yet are not meanes to bee neglected, which the Lord ministreth vnto vs to doe them by: otherwise God is tempted and despised.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other question: what neede wee to craue of God by praier, things necessurie, seeing that he knoweth them farre better than wee our selues?

*Mat.* Although hee doe, yet his will is that wee should obtaine them by daily praiers.

1 First, that wee may bee kept in some feare and reuerence by this outward adoration & worship, by the which also hee meeneth to excercise vs continually in thankfulnessse, that wee may so much the more acknowledge him to be the fountaine of all good things.

2 Secondly, he doth so much the more shew his loue towards vs, when he doth so farre abase himselfe, that he vouchsafeth to heare our complaints one after another seuerally, that he may prouide for them, so much as hee shall know to be conuenient. And by this meanes he enflameth vs to loue of himselfe, and causeth vs to put al our hope and confidence in him.

3 Thirdly, by that familiar cōmuning or talking with him, hee meaneth to make vs well acquainted with his excellent

Ro. ii. 15. 30.

That it is necessary to pray to God, although he know better than our selues, what is expedient for vs.

cellent Maieſty, that wee may bee bold to flie to him the more freely in all our neceſſities, as vnto our moſt mercifull Father.

4 Laſt of all, he doth this, that we may more and more confeſſe, that whatſoeuer good thing we haue, commeth from him alone, that we ſhould giue him thanks, and uſe it to his glory. For if he giue vs good things vnasked, wee ſhould eaſily beleue either that they were from our ſelues, or elſe that they came to vs by chance.

*Theoph.* While thou ſheweſt mee the cauſe why the Lord would haue vs to obtain by praier, the things that he hath determined to giue vs, thou haſt with the ſame labour declared the excellency and worthines of it. For I perceiue, that by it, almoſt the whol firſt table of the law is fulfilled.

*Mat.* Thou iudgeſt right. For by it, God is acknowledged with the mind, worſhipped with the bodie, and ſanctified and hallowed with the mouth.

Therefore alſo hee requireth praier of vs, as his ſpeciall worſhip: and among all the good things that he beſtoweth vpon vs, it is the greateſt, forasmuch as by it we may haue acceſſe to his Maieſty, ſo often as we pleaſe. For that good heavenly Father ſuffereth vs to comming to him familiarly and laying open our wants to him, euen as we might doe with ſome familiar friend of ours. Moreover, as the lawfull uſe of praier is very acceptable to God, and moſt profitable for our ſelues; ſo on the contrary ſide, there is nothing more diſpleaſing vnto God, and that doth more prouoke his wrath, then the abuſe of it.

*Theoph.* What is that abuſe?

*Mat.* It may be referred to ſix heads.

1 Firſt, when we make our praiers to any others, or What corrup-  
vnto himſelfe in any other name, but in the name of tion Saran  
Chriſt: and in this idolaters doe offend, that flie to An- hath brought  
gels, or to the Saints receiued into heauen. into praier.

2 Secondly, when the power of God is tied to ſome certaine praiers: which ſuperſtitious perſons do, that number their praiers, who alſo haue certaine ſet formes of praier, which they thinke vnlawfull to exceed.

3 Thirdly, when God is praied to, onely with the mouth, the heart in the meane time being very farre off: by

by the which sinne, the Maiestie of God is indeed shamefully despised. But therein they are especially deceived, that pray in a strange tongue which they vnderstand not. For it is impossible that our minde should attend vpon the things we vnderstand not.

4 Fourthly, when any prayeth vnto God with a vaine opinion of his owne righteousnesse, so as hee bee no whit touched with the true sense and feeling of his owne miserie. And therein hipocrites, and iustitaries, doe offend; of which number that proud Pharisee was, who in praying, gaue thanks to God, that he was not like to other men.

5 Fifthly, when any impenitent person, that indeuoureth not to amend his life, praierh: and this is the most common fault of praier, and vsuall also with them, which otherwise bragge of the professien of the Gospell. Who notwithstanding they auoid the foure former faults, yet are not free from this prophaning of the name of God, but doe most of all fall into the contempt of it.

*Theoph.* How?

*Mat.* Dost thou aske? Is not this to contemne his Maieesty, when they pray to God that his name may bee halowed, which they doe defile through their blasphemies and cursed oathes?

That his kingdome may come: when they make a scorn of the Ministerie of the Church?

That his will may be done, which they doe euery day set themselues against? and which more is, bee in a great fume, if any thing fall out contrary to their owne will?

Craue daily bread, which they get by vnlawfull means?

That hee will forgiue them their sinnes, as they forgiue their neighbours; and in the meane time pursue them with deadly hatred and haue done them wrong, and work them all euils and mischief?

That he will not leade them into temptation; but in the meane while purposely seeke vanities and allurements of the world, whereinto they may be led?

*Theoph.* But it may bee obiected, that none but meere profane persons, do the things that be against this praier.

*Mat.* I grant. But if a man doe against it in one onely point, he doth no lesse mocke God: for that cannot spring  
from

from any where else, saue from the contempt of his most holy Maiesty, so as he doth it wittingly and willingly.

Therefore **JAMES** saith; Whosoeuer keepeth the whole Law, and yet faileth in one point, is guilty of all. For euen as if one of the vital parts, wherein the life is in a mans body, be hurt, it bringeth death vnto a man, although all the other be well: so falleth he into destruction, that applieth himselfe to some good works, and abstaineth from many sinnes, neuertheless, in the meane time, continues in some one sinne, and flattereth himselfe in it, and repenteth not.

*Theo.* But thou vnderstandest not this, of the sins which we oftentimes commit, through the infirmity of our flesh.

*Mat.* These things bee vnderstood, neither of other, nor of these sins; so as there be repentance, and a desire to amend: for then God of his mercy doth pardon and forgive them all in Christ Iesus.

*Theoph.* The sixth and last fault in prayer is behind.

*Mat.* When a man prayeth without faith, that is, without assurance of being heard: and it is as it were the effect, and that which hangeth vpon the former sine. Neuertheless, this is a most grievous sinne: for that distrust must needs arise from this, that we beleue that God either cannot, or will not performe the thing we pray for; or else that hee heareth not our prayers: which verily cannot come into the minde of any man, but hee denieth either his power, or his goodnesse, or his Godhead.

For this cause **JAMES** saith, that euery one should pray with faith, and wauer not: for hee that waucreth is like a waue of the sea, tost of the winde, and carried away; neither let that man thinke, that he shall obtaine any thing of God. Christ also saith; Whatsoeuer you shall aske in prayer, if you beleue, you shall also receiue it.

*Theoph.* But why doest thou call this fault the effect of the former?

*Mat.* Because faith cannot stand with idolatry, nor with superstition, nor with prophanenesse, nor with hypocrisie, but especially, if there be an euill conscience: for euen the faithfull themselves finde it true by experience in themselves, that they cannot assure themselves that God is mercifull to them to heare their prayers, if through infirmity they

**JAMES 2, 10**

**JAM. 1 6.**

**MAT. 11 22.**

they fall into any sin, til they be reconciled to him by true repentance. Therefore faith is as it were the soule of true prayer: for it comprehendeth all the conditions of it.

Moreouer, as by it God is glorified, so also it is alwaies heard of him. But contrariwise, as the fained is despised, so he not onely neuer heareth it, but doth also contemne it, and most grieuously reuengeth the makers of it, as those of whom his most holy name is prophaned.

*Theoph.* This morning thy discourie of good workes did not a little delight mee: but this our disputation of prayer hath very greatly edified and comforted me. And by it in summe I haue learned these things:

1. How we ought to pray: namely, that our prayers be directed vnto God from the heart: but yet so, that we bee touched with the right feeling of our owne pouertie and misery, and with true repentance of our sinnes.

2. Secondly, what is to be asked at the hands of God, namely, the things that concerne his glory, and our owne saluation and profit.

3. Finally, by what meanes we shall obtaine them: euen if they be asked of vs with faith in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ. But I beseech God our heauenly Father, that the prayers that shall be made of vs, may be free from all those euill conditions which thou hast reckoned vp: that hee himselte may be so much the more glorified by them, and we daily haue experience of the effect of them: so as

He may comfort vs in our aduersities,

Helpe our necessities,

Succour our infirmities,

Bring helpe to our weakenesse,

And strengthen vs in his loue and feare,

And finally, confirme vs in the hope of euerlasting life, through Iesus Christ his Sonne, our most beloued Lord

*Mat.* So be it.

Now at length, we haue declared the chiefe points of Christian religion: and I hope by the grace of God, that they which are behinde shall be handled to morrow. In the meane time, God giue you good night.

*Theoph.* And you also.

*The end of the second Booke.*

THE



# THE THIRD BOOKE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

Intreating of the outward meanes, by the  
which God bringeth vs to  
saluation,

## CHAP. I.

*Of the Ministry of the word : by the which the holy Ghost be-  
getteth faith in our hearts, keepeth and increaseth it.*

### THEOPHILVS.

**G**od saue you most dearly beloued and reuerend  
brother.

*Mat.* God saue you also, most louing *Theophilus*.

*Theoph.* Shall it not be troublesome to thee for vs to re-  
turne to the disputation which we brake off, and to assy  
to bring it to an end ?

*Mat.* Nay rather (*Theophilus*) it shall be a most pleasant  
thing vnto me. Neuertheless, before we come to the mat-  
ter, I pray God, that as hitherto he hath beene with vs,  
he will also be with vs hereafter to the end.

*Theoph.* So be it. I will in few words repeate our former  
discourse, that the things which haue beene handled already,  
may be ioyned with those that follow.

1. First, hitherto hath been handled the chiefe grounds  
of our saluation, namely, the perfect iustice of God, and  
the deadly sicknesse of mans sinne.

A briefer re-  
hearfall of  
the former

2. Secondly, the most perfect remedy of it, euen Iesus books,  
Christ.

3. Furthermore, the applying of this remedie vnto vs  
by faith, by the which we reconer spirituall health, that is  
we are iustified before God, and there-through made par-  
takers of eternall life.

4. And last of all, faith, which is wrought in our hearts  
by the holy Ghost that regenerateth vs, together with re-  
pentance, from whence good workes doe flow : which in-  
deede bee testimonies of our faith ; but especially prayer.  
Therefore this one thing remaineth, that we vnderstand by  
what

The summe  
of the third  
booke.

## 202 *Concerning the Ministry of the Word*

What means the holy Ghost doth regenerate or renew vs,

1.Pet.1

*Mat.* PETER affirmeth, that we are begotten againe, not of corruptible seede, but of incorruptible, by the Word of the liuing God. And therefore we doe by good right say; That by it the holy Ghost begetteth in vs both faith and repentance.

*Theoph.* When hath the Word of God that force?

Rom. 10. 13

*Mat.* When it is preached of such as haue a lawfull calling thereto. For *Paul* saith, How shall they belecue in him of whom they haue not heard? How therefore without preaching? but how shall they preach, except they be sent? Out of which words he draweth this conclusion; Therefore faith is by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

Rom. 10. 17

*Theoph.* There be therefore diuers degrees or steps of our saluation. For it is plaine, by that which hath been said, that we cannot obtaine it.

1. Vnlesse we be reconciled to God.

2. But wee cannot be reconciled to God, without Christ.

3. Christ, without faith we can neuer haue. Loe heere three degrees, and now thou addest the fourth.

4. That wee cannot haue faith without the preaching of the Word.

Of the Word  
preached and  
receiued by  
faith.

1. Cor. 12

*Mat.* So it is. Whosoeuer therefore despise the preaching of the Word of God (which is in respect of vs the first step of our saluation) do despise & contemne their own saluation. For the Apostle saith; After that the world in the wisdom of God knew not God by his wisdom (that is, by the frame and workmanship of this world, by the which God maketh manifest his exceeding power and wisdom) it pleased God by foolish preaching to saue belecuers.

*Theoph.* Why calleth he preaching foolish, which in the former verse he had so highly extolled?

*Mat.* He doth that according to the opinion of men, of whom for the most part it is despised, no otherwise than if it were foolishnesse: notwithstanding he teacheth, that with God it is the greatest wisdom, vnto those of whom it is receiued and entertained with due reuerence. Which Christ confirmeth, when he saith; The kingdome of heauen is like a treasure hidde in the field, which when a man found

found he hid it, and for ioy of it, he goeth away, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

*Theoph.* But in those parables, Christ intreateth not of the preaching of the word, but of the kingdome of heauen, which indeed he saith is like vnto sundry things.

*Mat.* It is not to be doubted, but that by the name of the kingdome of heauen, he doth vnderstand the preaching of the word: and this is easily gathered euen out of the former parables, wherein he speaketh of the seed; for in them by the interpretation of Christ himselfe, the preaching of the word is meant.

*Theoph.* Why is the preaching of the Word called of Christ by the name of the kingdome of heauen?

*Mat.* To the end he might shew, that it is as it were a key, by the which the gate of the kingdome of heauen is opened vnto vs. Which thing in another place hee confirmeth, when he calleth the ministry of the word, the keyes *Math. 16. 19* of the kingdome of heauen.

*Theoph.* Now I desire to heare of thee what Christ meaneth by those parables of the treasure hidden in the field, and of that precious pearle, for the purchasing whereof he counselleth vs to sell all that we haue.

*Mat.* This is his minde; That the ministry of the word farre excelleth all earthly riches, and that therefore it is to be preferred before all our goods: yea rather that they ought all to be forsaken, than to suffer our selues to be depriued of it.

But, in hearing the word, we must diligently take heed of two extremities, whereinto Sathan labourerth all hee can to bring vs, so that he may take from vs the fruit which we are to reape of the preaching of the word. The one is the contempt of him that preacheth the word. The other, when we attribute or giue vnto him more than is right.

*Theoph.* What discommodity haue wee by the former of the two extremities?

*Mat.* That wee haue no fruite of his preaching, whose person we despise. For the contempt of the doctrine doth necessarily follow the contempt of his person. For this cause *Paul*, meaning to commend Pastors in respect of the

A most profitable admonition to such as heare the preaching of the word.

*1st. 3. 7.*

*Rom. 16. 29*

204 *Concerning the Ministry of the Word.*

excellency of their office, applicth vnto them this saying of ESAY; how beautifull are the secte of them that preach peace, and bring tidings of good things!

*Theoph.* What discommodity ariseth of the other extremitie?

*Mat.* When too much is ascribed to the person of him which preacheth the word, it followeth, that the force of preaching is attributed vnto his person. And therefore when that is yeilded to men that is due vnto God, men spoile themselves of the fruit of the Ministry. And this is that wherein in former times the Corinthians offended, when one said, I am *Pauls*; I am *Apolloes*; I am of *Cephas*; and I am *Christs*: which mischiefe, that the Apostle might remedy, he beateth downe the persons of the Ministers in these words; Who then is *Paul*, and who is *Apollos*, but the Ministers by whom you haue belecued? I haue planted, *Apollos* hath watred, but God hath giuen the increase. Therefore saith he, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watreth, but God that giueth the increase. For this cause the same Apostle saith; God hath put the treasure of preaching in earthen vessels, that the excellency of that power might be of God and not of vs. That is to say God for the most part sendeth Ministers of adiect and base condition, that their excellency should not darken the power which he sheweth by their ministry.

1. Cor. 1. 13

1. Cor. 3. 5

2. Cor. 4. 7.

*Theoph.* Now I see the inconueniences whereunto those two extremities do carry vs. Which that we may auoide, the meane must be held and kept, namely that we honour the Ministers for their office committed vnto them, and their preaching in respect of God, whose power is manifested by it.

*Mat.* Thou iudgeth rightly. For we must do as if a king should send vs some gift by the meanest of his seruants. For we would inertaine him honourably, in consideration of the gift brought by him: but the gift it selfe we would receiue for the kings sake that sent it.

*Theoph.* Let vs goe forward. I desire that thou wouldst shew, what is the vse of Preaching, after that the holy Ghost by it hath wrought in vs faith and repentance.

*Mat.* That both may be preferued in vs, yea, rather increased

increased. For as a yong childe after he is borne, standeth in neede of nourishment, that life may both bee preserved and increased: so he that is begotten a new by the seede of the word of God, must be fed by the same, that he may get strength and spirituall increase, till, saith the Apostle, wee come to a perfect man, and to the measure of the age of the fulnesse of Christ; that is, till we come to perfection in selfe, whereto indeed, wee shall neuer come, so long as wee liue in this world.

*Theoph.* Is not the reading of the word of God sufficient for these things, although there be no preaching?

*Mat.* No; not so: euen as the vse of meats is not sufficient to the nourishment of mans body; except they bee dressed and prepared. For which cause verily, God when hee would threaten an extreame punishment to his people saith; Behold the dayes come, that I will send a famine into the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of God.

By the which words he meaneth, that wee cannot be spiritually fed without preaching. Yet neuertheless, the often reading of the word of God, bringeth no little helpe to the preaching of it. For otherwise it should neuer haue bene so diligently commended of God.

Whereby it appeareth, that the holy Ghost, after he hath by the vncorrupt seede of the word of God, wrought in vs faith and repentance; confirmeth, and as it were nourisheth them, both by the preaching and reading of the same word, and by the vse of the Sacraments, ordained of God for the ratifying and sealing of it.

*Theoph.* Wee will therefore speake of the Sacraments, when wee shall haue handled two questions appertaining to the preaching of the word.

1. The first is, concerning the calling of the Pastors, to whom this preaching is committed.

2. The other is, of the Word that they are to preach. I will therefore begin with the first. For what cause saidst thou, that the Pastors ought to bee lawfully called to preach that word?

*Mat.* The cause is most euident. For euen as in a kingdom well ordered, there is no man which ought or may

What the vse of preaching is, after we haue faith and repentance; Eph. 4.16

Amos 8.11

Of the calling of the Ministers of the word,

206 *Concerning the Ministry of the Word.*

exercise any publicke office but by the commandement of the King: so none ought or can be accounted a true Pastor in the Church of God to preach his word, except he be by him called with a lawfull calling. For how can we beleue that God ratifieth that which a mortall man doth with vs, vnlesse it be first certainly knowne that he hath his commission from him.

*Theoph.* What is that lawfull vocation or calling?

Vocation of  
ministers two  
fold,

*Mat.* It is two-fold.

The one extraordinary,  
The other ordinary.

*Theoph.* What is the extraordinary calling?

*Mat.* When any is called immediately of God: such as was the calling of the Apostles.

Iohn 10.21  
Extraordina-  
ry calling.

*Theoph.* What is the meaning of the word Apostle?

*Mat.* It is a Greeke word, which signifieth sent, and they were called by that name, to declare their office: namely, because they were sent of God by Christ, to preach the Gospell throughout the whole world. Therefore Christ said vnto them; As my Father sent me, so doe I send you.

*Theoph.* Why callest thou that calling extraordinary?

*Mat.* Because God vseth it extraordinarily, and that onely for a time, namely, when the Churches are not yet settled and established: as in the time of Christ, when the Gospell was knowen scarce to any mortall man.

*Theoph.* This therefore thou meanest; After the Churches be planted and settled, that the ordinary calling should succcede the extraordinary, to the end it may haue place in them.

*Mat.* Yea verily.

*Theoph.* Let vs now therefore intreate of that ordinarie calling: and first shew what it is.

Ordinary  
calling.

*Mat.* It is two-fold:

1. Inward, and 2. Outward.

*Theoph.* What is the inward calling?

*Mat.* That holy desire which any hath in the ministerie of the Church, to serue the glory of God, wherewith he is mooued to prepare himselfe to the faithfull execution of that office, when he shall be called thereunto with the outward calling:

*Theoph.*



*Theoph.* What is that outward calling?

*Mat.* The lawfull choice of a visible Church, met together in the name of Christ. For hee hath promised, if but two or three be gathered together in his name, to bee present in the midst of them. After this manner were the Pastors of the primitive Church called to the ministerie: and this is the true dore of Christs sheepefold, whereof mention is made in Iohn in these words: Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not in by the dore into the fold of the sheepe, but climeth vp another way, is a theefe & a robber.

Iohn. 10. 1

*Theoph.* How many things be required, that the choice of the Church may be lawfull?

*Mat.* Three. First, that there be a search and trial both of the conversation, and also of the learning of him that is to be chosen. And this indeede is necessarily required in a minister, as PAUL expressly warneth: A Bishop must be faultlesse as Gods Steward: not forwardly pleasing himselfe, nor angry, nor given to wine, no striker, not covetous of filthy gaine, but given to hospitality, a lover of those that are good, temperat, just, holy, sober, holding fast that faithfull word which serueth to doctrine, that he may also be able to exhort with holisome doctrine, and to convince the gain-sayers.

Three things  
required in  
the lawfull  
calling of a  
Minister.  
Tit 1. 7.

*Theoph.* Is the office of a Bishop the same with the office of a Pastor?

*Mat.* Yea, altogether. For when PAUL calleth them by that name, they be put in remembrance of their dute, as also by other names, by the which they bee called euerie where in the Scriptures, as Ministers, Shepheards, Elders.

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore weigh the signification, and reason of these names.

*Mat.* First of all, the name of Bishop, which signifieth an especiall, or one that watcheth, admonisheth them that are called to the Ministerie of the Church to watch, and to haue their eyes alwaies set vpon the flocke committed to their charge, that it be not corrupted either with sinners, or with false doctrine.

Bishop

Secondly, they are called Ministers or seruants of Iesus Christ, that they may vnderstand that they serue not men, but God and therefore ought with the more diligence to

Ministers

apply themselues to the execution of their function.

Shepheards.

Thirdly, they be called Pastours or Shepheards, to put them in remembrance that the flocke of Christ is continually to be fed with the word of God, & to be looked vnto, that the diuell, which is a rauening wolfe, enter not into it.

Elders.

Finally, they be called Seniors, Elders, or Ancients, to declare the grauitie of manners, wherewith it is fit they should be beautified, so as they may be free from all lightnesse and vanity, which for the most part is vsuall in young yeres.

*Theoph.* Therefore these sundry names, are not tokens of any degrees or dignitie.

*Mat.* Not at all: For Christ heretofore commanded this to his disciples sitting among themselues for the primacie or chiefey, that he which would be the chiefe among them, should be seruant to all. Which indeede was not spoken for their sakes alone, but is set forth as a rule to al Ministers of the Church.

*Theoph.* Thou hast now declared vnto me that first condition of the lawfull calling of Ministers: I pray thee goe on to the other.

*Mat.* Another is this, that men come not to it by any corruptions of gifts; but that it be free: so as they that haue the power to chuse, should haue onely the glory of God, and the edification of his Church, before their eyes.

Thirdly, that he which is chosen haue a church appointed vnto him for the execution of his office, whose dutie it is to looke vnto it diligently and carefully.

*Theoph.* If it fall out that he which is chosen, do forsake his calling, is he to be accounted a Pastor or Minister?

*Mat.* No verily: vnlesse peraduenture hee bee enforced thereto, for want of health. For otherwise hee is no more worthy the name of a shepheard, than hee that hath vnto him selfe given over the keeping and care of the flocke.

*Theoph.* Is it lawfull for him that is called to the Ministry of the Church, to leaue off that calling to take another?

*Mat.* It is not lawfull vnlesse it be vpon some very speciall, known, and approued occasion. For the Apostle witnesseth, that a necessitie lieth vpon him to preach the Gospel,

pell,

spell, who is once called to the ministry of the Church :  
Woe vnto him (saith he) if he preach not the Gospell.

1. Cor. 9. 16

*Theoph.* You haue verily reckoned vp worthy conditions;  
which whosoeuer hath, is indeede to bee accounted a Pa-  
stor or Shepherd of the flocke of Christ; namely

1. That he feele within him an inward calling,
2. Be of good conuersation,
3. Of sound doctrine,
4. Apt to teach,
5. Be lawfully chosen by the Church,
6. And finally, performe his office diligently toward

the flocke committed to his charge. But yet you make no  
mention of personall succession from the Apostles time;  
without which notwithstanding, many thinke that the cal-  
ling is voide and of none effect.

Personall suc-  
cession.

*Mat.* I grant indeede, that, to make a man lawfully cal-  
led to the ministerie of the Church, Apostolical succession  
is necessarie, which neuerthelesse is to bee vnderstood of  
the doctrine of the Apostles; nor of their persons. For  
euen as heretofore MATTHIAS was successor to IVDAS;  
that is, a holy seruant of God to a traitor: so also it hath fal-  
len out diuers times, that IVDAS hath succeeded MATTHIAS;  
that is, schismatics and hereticks haue succeeded the  
most faithfull seruants of Christ. Moreouer there is no tes-  
timony in all the Scripture; by the which it can be proued  
that that personall succession is required as necessary to the  
calling of the Ministers. This indeed is true, that, if there  
be both, the calling thereby hath the more authoritie: as it  
was in that which they call the Primitiue Church: for in  
it the personall succession was ioined with the truth of  
doctrine. But when the truth of doctrine is ouerthrowne,  
then personall succession is nothing else but a visard,  
which Sathan vseth to blind-fold the eies of men, to the  
end he may keepe them in error. Therefore, when it com-  
meth so to passe, as it is now in the Church of Rome, what  
madnesse is it, to desire that the election and calling of Mi-  
nisters, to preach the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles,  
should hang vpon their person and will, that bewray them-  
selues to be his open enemies: and whose calling if it were  
examined by the former rule expressed in the word of God

110 *Concerning the ministerie of the Word.*

should be found to be void and nothing worth.

*Theoph.* I desire you in few words to declare vnto mee those points, wherein the truth of Christian doctrine is ouerthrowen, in the Papacie.

A short re-  
hearfall of Po-  
pish impieties

*Mat.* It standeth chiefly in two heads or principal things The first is, in that the sincere and true worship of God is defiled with innumerable superstitions, yea with idolatry. The other is that which respecteth the benefite of Christ: which indeed is ouerthrowen, with the doctrine:

1. Of free-will,
2. Of iustification by workes,
3. Of the merit of workes,
4. Of the intercession of Saints,
5. Of the Popes supremacy,
6. Of the workes of supererogation,
7. Of Pardons,
8. Of Purgatorie fire,

Out of which vngodly and wicked doctrines, the Masse was at length forged and patched vp, by the Church of ROME.

*Theoph.* The first five of these haue already bene declared by you: but the sixt, namely of workes of supererogation, I scarce vnderstand what it meameth, I would therefore haue you shew it me briefly.

Workes of su-  
pererogation.

*Mat.* To supererogate in Latine signifieth so much, as in the businesse of another man to lay out a greater summe than we receiued of him, by meanes whereof hee is made debter ynto vs.

But these men dreame, that men may doe more good workes, than God hath commanded: and those according to this similitude, they call workes of supererogation, signifying that in respect of them they account God to be in their debts; than which doctrine, what is more monster-like? for any to beleene, that a mortall man can binde his Creator vnto him: to whom notwithstanding, whatsoever good thing he is able at any time to performe, that all he is indebted and bound to doe, according as hath bin shewed of vs in the chapter of workes. But what a mischief it is, that a great part of these workes of supererogation, is nothing else but idolatry or superstition? such as he religi-

ous

ous pilgrimages, monasticall life, and such other of that kinde, wherewith God is euen offended. Wherefore seeing they haue set themselves against his will, the Lord is not onely nothing in their debt: but contrariwise they are so much the more holden guiltie before his iudgement seate.

*Theoph.* Verily, till now I knew not that opinion, as neither the other concerning pardons, which I desire thee to declare vnto me.

*Mat.* It is no lesse absurd than the other, forasmuch as it hangeth vpon it. And these doctrines do leane & stay themselves vpon two most impious and vngodly foundations.

Popish pardons.

1 First, because they thinke that Christ by his death hath satisfied, not for the punishment, but for the fault onely of those sinnes which are committed of vs after Baptisme: and therefore that we our selves must satisfie for it, either in this life, or in Purgatory fire, till it be fully paid.

2 Secondly, that one drop of Christs blood was sufficient for our redemption. And that whatsoeuer he suffered besides, which is indeed an infinite merit, is laid vp in the treasure of the Church, together with the innumerable works of supererogation wrought by hiee Saints, and shiee Saints, for the which God is indebted vnto them. Of this treasure (say they) the Pope is the dispenser and steward, wherof he giueth to such as he seeth good, that is, to such as pay money. That gift they call Indulgences or pardons, because they serue to remit or lessen somewhat of the punishment, to be otherwise suffered in Purgatory fire.

As often therefore as the Pope by his indulgences granteth twenty, or an hundred yeeres of pardon, this hee meaneth, that somuch is diminished of the time of that punishment, which wee had deserued for full satisfaction to be suffered for our sinnes, either in this life, or in the life to come. Yea they say further (such is the height of their ignorance) that these pardons, doe profit the dead, namely such as be in the fire of Purgatorie; in so much as that if the Pope would seriously and in earnest draw forth that his treasure of pardons, he could (say they) emptie it, and send the soules tormented in Purgatorie, directly into the heauens.

*Theoph.*

212 *Concerning the ministry of the Word.*

*Theoph.* Why therefore doth hee it not? according to the patterne of that pardon, the Vicar whereof hee saith that that he is vpon the earth.

*Mat.* Left that Purgatorie fire should be altogether put out: by the which the Church of Rome hath gotten so great riches, wherewith it now aboundeth.

*Theoph.* I do verily see, that vpon good cause it was said of thee, that the truth of doctrine is vtterly ouerthrowen in the Church of Rome. For these two points, which thou hast euen now spoken of, doe almost altogether abolish and take away the grace of God, and benefit of Christ. Let vs now goe forward to the rest. Concerning the first part of this point, namely the lawfull calling of Ministers, I require no more. Let vs speake of the other, namely of the word of God which they are to preach. How many principall parts be there of it?

The Law.

*Mat.* Two: the Law, and the Gospell.

*Theoph.* What vnderstandest thou, by the name of the Law?

*Mat.* That doctrine, by which is taught what is to bee done to obey God; which indeed is contained in the ten commandements which we lately expounded.

*Theoph.* But what is the Gospell?

The Gospell.

*Mat.* The word of ~~a~~ selfe signifieth good tidings: but in this place it is taken of that doctrine, which containeth the promise of forgiveness of finnes, and euerlasting life, which God hath made vnto vs in the word, by his Sonne. And it is called good tidings, because it is the most excellent message of all that can be brought.

*Theoph.* To what end must the Law be preached?

*Mat.* That men by the knowledge of their finnes, may be brought to Christ, and to repentance and amendment of life. For therefore God gaue it, as wee haue said in this place.

*Theoph.* Whereunto is the preaching of the Gospell to bee referred?

*Mat.* Hereto, that the penitent may bee assured of the forgiveness of sins, and the enioying of eternall life. For this cause Christ saith; that so he ought to haue suffered, & rise againe the third day; and that, in his name, repentance

Luk. 24. 46.



### The third Booke.

tance and forgiuenesse of finnes should bee preached vnto all nations. But he saith expressly, IN HIS NAME; because both repentance, and the forgiuenesse of finnes, haue their ground and foundation in the force of his death and resurrection: without the which we can neither repent, nor obaine forgiuenesse of finnes; as it hath also beene said in its owne place.

*Theoph.* What is the cause that Christ maketh mention of repentance, before the forgiuenesse of finnes?

*Mat.* Not indeede to teach that repentance goeth before forgiuenesse of finnes: forasmuch as this rather goeth before that; for no man can repent, except (his sins being pardoned) the Holy Ghost bee giuen him, by the helpe whereof he may repent: But to teach the Ministers, that the doctrine of remission of finnes, is not to be applied but to the penitent, seeing that, faith (by the which we are made partakers of Christ and his benefits) maketh it selfe apparent and to bee seene by repentance; which also was shewed in the proper place.

*Theoph.* Seeing repentance is to be preached with remission of finnes, it followeth, that the morall Law is not contrary to the Gospell of grace.

*Mat.* Neither is it indeede contrary, but in respect of them which seeke their saluation, either wholly or in part, by their good workes: for the Apostle saith; As many of you as be iustified by the Law, are made voids of Christ; and fallen from grace.

But in respect of the faithfull, who know that their saluation dependeth vpon the onely mercie of God in Christ, there is a good agreement betweene the Law & the Gospell. For the Law sheweth vs sinne, and the damnation that we haue pulled vpon our selues by it, and so, it leadeth vs to the Gospell, by the which sinne is put away, and wee discharged of condemnation.

Secondly, the Law sheweth what is to be done: but the Gospell, by the spirit of regeneration, ministereth vnto vs power both to will and to doe.

*Theoph.* Seeing there is so good a consent betweene the Law and the Gospell, wherefore doth PAUL say; You are not vnder the Law, but vnder grace? for it seemeth hee would

The agreement and disagreement of the Law and Gospell.

Gal. 3.4.

Rom. 6.14

would say thus much; that the Law is abolished and taken away by the Gospell of grace.

How the  
Law is taken  
away.

Gal. 3. 13.

Math. 5. 17

Rom. 3. 31

*Mat.* And indeede he vnderstandeth it of the abolishing of the Law by the Gospell, but concerning the condemnation and curse of it onely, as he himselfe in another place expoundeth, in these words; Christ hath redeemed vs from the curse of the Law; when he was made a curse for vs. Howbeit concerning the vse of it, it is no way abolished; for Christ himselfe saith; I came not to take away the Law, but to fulfill it. Which also the Apostle confirmeth in the Epistle to the Romanes. For, after that he had taught, that we are iustified not by the Law, but by faith in Iesus Christ, he presently addeth; Doe wee therefore make the Law voide through faith? God forbid; yea rather we establish the Law. And indeede, why should that most excellent benefit, which the Gospell yeeldeth vnto vs, discharge vs from the worship and seruing of God? by the which rather we are the more inuited and stirred vp to performe it towards him.

*Theoph.* Is the Law therefore neuer to be separated from the Gospell?

The Law neuer  
to be se-  
parated from  
the Gospell

*Mat.* The one indeede is to bee distinguished from the other, that wee confound not the mercy of God with our works; which they do corruptly, that will mingle the righteousness of faith, with the righteousness of the Law, that is to say, heauen with earth: neuertheless, they are not to be separated, neither yet to be preached apart.

Mark 16. 15

*Theoph.* But Christ sending forth his Apostles to preach the Gospell throughout the whole world; maketh mention onely of the Gospell; for hee saith; Goe preach the Gospell to euery creature.

Luk. 24. 46  
A right man-  
ner of prea-  
ching.

*Mat.* The word Gospell, set by it selfe, comprehendeth also vnder it the doctrine of repentance, and therefore the Law, no lesse than the doctrine of remission of sinnes. Which indeede is plaine by the place of *LYKE* alladged euen now, who expoundeth those words of *MARIE*: His words be these; Christ ought to suffer, and in his name repentance and forgiveness of sinnes to be preached. It is therefore the dutie of Ministers, in their Sermons, by the preaching of the Law, to bring men to the true know-  
ledge

ledge and feeling of their finnes, and to ioyne therewith the threatnings denounced against the breakers of the Law, and to exhort them to true repentance and amendment of life. Then they ought to set before them the forgiveness of finnes, from the doctrine of the Gospell of grace. But contrariwise, they ought to propound wrath and the iust iudgement of God against the disobedient and stubborne, except they conuert and repent. And these indeed be the keies of the Church, which Christ had promised to PETER, and in him to the other Apostles, and to Pastors : which also after his resurrection he deliuered to his Apostles, when hee sent them to preach the Gospell throughout the whole world.

The keies of  
the Church,

*Theoph.* But why did he then promise those keies to PETER alone ? which neuertheless, as thou saist, he meant to giue to the Apostles also ?

*Mat.* Because he then spake to PETER only. But as a liue before, PETER, not onely in his owne name, but also in the name of all the rest of the Apostles, which had that one faith, had confessed that Iesus was the Christ, and the Son of the liuing God : in like manner, when Christ promised the keies to PETER, he meant that they were also promised to the rest of the Apostles, which hee doth sufficiently declare in the deliuey of them : for hee saith to all at once ; Receiue the holy Ghost : Whose finnes you remit, they are remitted to them : whose sinities you retaine, they are retained. The same also did the other Apostles and all the Pastors confirme, when, exercising their ministry, they vsed those keies.

*Theoph.* Wherefore doth Christ call the ministry of Pastors by the name of keies ?

*Mat.* To the end we might vnderstand, that the kingdom of heauen (as wee haue declared before) is by the ministry of the Church set open to the beleeuers and penitent, and that it is shut against the vnbeleuers and stubborne ; namely, when as by it the former haue their finnes forgiven, that so they may come to eternall life : but to the other they bee retained, that so they may be shut from it. For God doth ratifie that in heauen, which the Ministers vpon earth pronounce out of his word, euen as it appeareth

## 216 Concerning the Ministry of the Word.

Math. 16. 19

reth by the words of Christ himselfe vnto PETER, for after promise of the keyes, presently hee addeth; Whatsoeuer thou shalt bind in earth, shall bee bound in heauen: and whatsoeuer thou shalt loose in earth, shall be loosed in heauen. And the selfe same thing he repeated after to all the Apostles, to shew that they had like authoritie of binding and loosing giuen to them with PETER.

What it is to  
bind & loose.

*Theoph.* Therefore to bind and loose, is nothing else but to declare the remission of sinnes, or to retaine them.

*Mat.* Indeed nothing, as it is plaine by the interpretation of Christ himselfe; for he said to his Apostles in the place which cuen now we recited, Receiue the Holy Ghost: whose sinnes ye remit, they be remitted vnto them; whose sinnes you shall retaine, they shall be retained. For there is no harder bond than sinne, forasmuch as being bound with it, we be held, and indeed willingly, vnder the power and tyranny of the diuel and death, and it cannot be loosed by any strength of man but by the onely might of Christ.

*Theoph.* Why then doth Christ commit the office of binding and loosing to the Minister? seeing he himselfe alone hath the power of binding and loosing?

2. Cor. 5. 19

*Mat.* It is, that we may vnderstand, that the Ministers be as it were Ambassadors, and Proclaimers of the will of God; which PAUL teacheth in these words: God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himselfe, not imputing to them their sinnes: and hath put in vs the word of reconciliation. Therefore wee are Ambassadors in the name of Christ; as though God by vs did exhort you, we intreate you in Christs stead to be reconciled vnto God.

*Theoph.* I see not therefore, that the Ministers haue more power of binding and loosing granted them, than any other priuate man; for there is none that may not assure the bele cuer and penitent of the forgiveness of his sinnes; and contrariwise, which may not set the iudgement of God before the vnbele cuer and obstinate, except hee repent. And that verily shall be confirmed in heauen, as it was pronounced by that priate person: for that is the will of God reuealed in his word.

Of the authori-  
ty of the  
Ministers of  
the Church,

*Mat.* That is right indeede; but there is some speciall thing to bee considered in the promise of Christ made to  
the

the Ministers; namely, that by his Spirit he will giue more efficacy and force to their words than to the words of any priuate man; so as they shall by faith be receiued of the beleuer, and shall terrifie the conscience of the vnbeleuer, and set before his eyes the wrath and iudgement of God. For otherwise, the name of the keyes of the kingdome of heauen should flatly be giuen vnto the Ministry of the Church: seeing that to bring vs to enter into it, it is not enough that the doctrine of forgiveness of sinnes beare our eares, but specially that it enter into their hearts, and be receiued of vs in faith and obedience: whereunto is referred that saying of PAUL; Neither my speech, nor my preaching stood in the enticing words of mans wisdom, but in the demonstration or euidence of spirituall power. For this cause also ISAIAH calleth the preaching of the word, The arme of the Lord, that is the instrument, by the which hee declareth his might and power, that hee may bring vs to saluation.

*Theoph.* I see indeed, that the force and fruit of preaching the Word of God is very great. For these three steps by the which we obtaine spirituall health, whereof thou didst intreat in the Chapter of Faith, are by it daily called to vse and practise.

*Mat.* Thou iudgeth right. For first, the Law is preached, that we may acknowledge our deadly disease, namely, sin.

Secondly, the Gospell is preached, wherein the sauing remedy is offered vnto vs in Christ.

Last of all, Faith which is wrought in vs, and increased by the preaching of the word, applieth that medicine vnto vs; so as we obtaine saluation, euen the full forgiveness of all our sinnes.

*Theoph.* The article of remission of sinnes in the Creed, vnlesse I be deceiued, is therefore set after the article of the Church, to the end we might know, that it is offered vnto vs by the Ministry of it.

*Mat.* It is indeed: and therefore there is no forgiveness of sinnes, neither saluation without the Church; as in the flood there was no safety out of the Arke of NOAH, wherein also at that time the Church of God was then shew'd; that being as it were a type of it.

*Theoph.*

Cor. 1. 4

1 Cor. 5. 3

The efficacy and fruit of the Word preached.

1 Cor. 1. 4

118 *Concerning the Ministry of the Word*

*Theoph.* You haue hitherto largely enough taught, that by the ministry of the word we do truly obtaine forgiveness of our finnes. Notwithstanding, there be two things behinde, whereof I will aske you, before wee come to the other Treatises:

1. First, whether God doe wholly (as they say) forgive to the repentant all their finnes?

2. Secondly, whether hee forgive them perfectly; namely, remitteth the punishment and the fault, so as they be not any more imputed vnto vs?

*I. Iohn 1. 7*  
All finnes be  
forgiuen to  
the penitent.

*Mat.* Let vs speake of the former. In the first place *Iohn* saith that the blood of Christ doth wash vs from all sinne. He that saith ALL, excepting nothing. Now, repentance yeeldeth vnto vs a more certaine testimony of our faith: by the which, as hath beene said, wee bee made partakers of Christ and of his gifts. Whereupon it followeth, that whosoever repenteth, may most certainly determine, that all his finnes (albeit they bee grievous) are forgiven and done away. Which also is taught, by the example of that sinful woman, and of the theefe.

*Math. 23. 32.*

Of the sinne  
against the  
Holy Ghost.  
*Heb. 6. 4.*

*Theoph.* But Christ saith, that the sinne against the Holy Ghost, shall neuer be forgiven.

*Mat.* Hee saith so indeede: And the Apostle to the Hebrewes sheweth, that it is impossible that such as fall into it, should bee renewed by repentance. For that is the gift of God, granted of them onely, of whom he hath determined in Christ to haue mercy.

*Theoph.* But what is that sinne against the Holy Ghost?

*Mat.* These words, Against the Holy Ghost, doe sufficiently declare what it is: namely, when any, after that he hath by the Holy Ghost been enlightened with the knowledge of the truth of the Gospell, standeth against that truth, not for feare, or through infirmity, but vpon wilfull malice. For then wittingly and willingly hee resisteth the Holy Ghost, and maketh warre against him.

*Theoph.* How knowest thou that this is the sinne against the Holy Ghost?

*Mat.* First, it may be gathered of that, which gaue our Saviour Christ occasion to speake of it: namely, that he might proue the Scribes and Pharisees to be guilty of that horrible



horrible sinne, who said that the myracles which hee did were wrought by the diuell, whereof notwithstanding, they were not ignorant that God was the Author, and Christ himselfe by most certaine arguments did declare. And his myracles they did maliciously dispraise in the hatred of his doctrine, which they perceiued was manifestly confirmed by them. From hence therefore it is plaine, that they sin against the holy Ghost, who vpon set malice stand against the knowne truth. Adde herunto, that by sundry places of the Scripture it appeareth, that euery other sinne is forgiven: not excepting that which is against the doctrine of faith, so as it be done either of ignorance, (as it was with Paul, when he persecuted the Church) or through infirmity and weakenesse, as when Peter denied Christ.

*Theoph.* It is verily a wonder, that so horrible wickednes can enter into the minds of men; as vpon purposed malice to striue against the knowne truth.

*Mat.* It commeth to passe by the iust iudgement of God vnto those that haue long and much despised and set light by his most precious gifts; namely, his louing kindnes and mercy in Christ (the knowledge whereof, notwithstanding he had vouchsafed them): and at length they be delivered to the power of the diuell, that by steps and degrees they may fall to that extreme and finall Apostasie. And because they are by it become like vnto Satan (namely, in that, vpon knowledge and wilful malice, they resist the truth) they no otherwise than he himselfe, bee deprived of all hope of saluation.

*Theoph.* Let vs now come to the other question: when God forgiveth sins, whether doth he it perfectly, so as hee remitteth the punishment and the fault?

*Mat.* As God is perfect, so doth hee perfectly forgieue sinnes; so as he neuer remembreth them, nor imputeth them vnto vs: for so he saith euery where by his Prophets; If your sinnes were as crimson, they shall bee made whiter than snow: if they were as red as scarlet, they shall be as wooll, I haue put away thy transgressions as thicke clouds; and thy sins as a mist. He will lay aside our iniquities, and cast all our sinnes into the bottome of the sea. As farre as the East is distant from the West, so farre doth he remove

Whether  
God remic-  
teth the pu-  
nishment and  
the fault,  
Esay. 1. 18.  
Esay. 44. 22.  
Mich. 7. 19.

Psal. 103. 12.

220 *Concerning the Ministry of the Word.*

our sins from vs. Neither is this any maruell. For, seeing the forgiuenesse of our sinnes is grounded vpon Christ, in whom they be fully punished, God should be vniust, if he required any thing further for them.

An obiection  
against the  
doctrine of  
remitting the  
punishment  
and fault,

*Theoph.* But wee read, that DAVID suffered many punishments, after that (by the message of NATHAN) he was certified of the forgiuenesse of his adultery. For the childe that was born vnto him of BATHSHEBA died. Moreouer also, his soane ABSOLON was raised vp against him, who both made warre vpon him, and defiled his wiues: which punishment was indeed denounced against him by the Prophet. Whereupon it seemeth to follow, that God forgiueth the sinne, but retaineth the punishment.

The answer  
to the ob-  
jection,

*Mat.* This is the doctrine of the Romanists, from whence came the dreame of Pardons, and Purgatorie fire, as hath before beene declared of vs. Neuerthelesse, I am glad it is so come to passe, that we may fitly speak of it in this place. For I will shew that it is most absurd, inasmuch as it separateth those things, which of their owne nature do wholly hang together. For if thou take away the fault, there is no place left for punishment: otherwise God should be vniust, if he should punish whom he accounteth not faultie. Moreouer, seeing Christ himselfe in his owne body suffered the punishments due for our sinnes, it is not to be doubted, but that he hath discharged vs from the same: euen as *Esay* expressly affirmeth, in these words: Verily, he hath borne our griefes, and hath carried our sorrows: and we thought him stricken, wounded of God, and humbled; but he was wounded for our iniquities and broken for our sinnes. The chastisement of our peace was vpon him: and by his stripes we are healed. All we as sheepe haue gone astray, euery one hath turned to his owne way, and the Lord hath laid vpon him the iniquities of vs all. For this cause also *PAVL* saith; That there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus. Whereby it plainly appeareth, that God (when through Christ he forgiueth sinnes) doth no lesse remit the punishment of them than the fault. For otherwise our case should be most miserable (yea rather we are already cast-awaies) and the forgiuenesse of our sinnes auaieth vs nothing, if the punishment be retained.

*Esay 53 4*

*Rom. 3. 1*

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because wee be vnable to beare the burthen of it; forasmuch as it is infinite no lesse than the fault: for they be of the same nature.

*Theoph.* What thinke you of the afflictions which God sendeth vnto vs, euen after the forgiuenesse of sinnes?

*Mat.* I say they be not sent to be punishments of sinnes: but to be vnto vs in stead of chastisements and corrections to humble vs, and that we may be the wiser after: for the Apostle saith: When wee are chastised, wee are instructed of the Lord, that wee should not be condemned with the world.

1. Cor. 11. 34

*Theoph.* Therefore the nature of afflictions be changed when they be sent to the godly: for they be not punishments of sinnes to satisfie the iudgement of God.

*Mat.* You say well: and the same is to be thought of the infirmities of the body: which we know he left vs, not to be punishments of sinnes; but in exercising of patience. The same also is to be said of death, which to vs is as a bridge, by the which we passe ouer vnto euermlasting life, and a way is made for the resurrection; which neuertheless, of it owne nature, is a punishment of sinne, and putteth vs in mind of it. But it is not sent to the faithfull to call them to account for their sins, as it cometh to passe to the wicked.

*Theoph.* By the solution and answer of these questions, mee thinkes I vnderstand this, that by the ministry of the Church, all sinnes of what kind soeuer be forgiuen to the penitent. Moreover, that there is no other satisfaction for them required of God, besides the most precious blood of Iesus Christ; by the which, both the fault and punishment of them is wholly taken away: which doctrine doth indeed bring the greatest consolation. Howbeit, before I make an end of this speech, I will aske you, whether Gods indulgence (or readinesse to forgiue) doe minister vnto them occasion to flatter themselues in their finnes, and to contriue in them?

Whether the declaration of Gods mercy giue men occasion to continue in their finnes,

*Mat.* Nay rather cleane contrariwise. For the hope and assurance of obtaining pardon, doth stir vp the godly, that they doe not cloake or maintaine themselues in their sins.

Psal. 130.4

Ezech. 3.20

Whereunto that saying of the Prophet is to be referred; with thee there is mercy that thou maiest be feared. For, from whence is obedience, but from loue? And againe, whence is loue, but from the knowledge and assurance of Gods goodnesse towards vs? Moreouer, this doctrine of the forgiuernes of sinnes, pertaineth not to any, saue to the penitent. But concerning the rest, the Scripture denounceth to them the wrath and iudgement of God. Yea rather the Lord saith by the Prophet, that euen as he will forget the sinnes of him that repenteth, so he will not remember the righteousnesse of him that shall turne from the right way. Whereupon it is plaine, that this doctrine doth not onely bring very great comfort to the faithfull, but also doth continually spurre them forward to apply themselves to amendment of life.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Sacraments, ordained of God to be as it were seales of the Word; that we may with more assurance embrace the promise by Christ, reuealed in the Word.*

THEOPHILVS.

**H**itherto we haue sufficiently spoken of the Ministry of the Word. Now we are come to the Sacraments: And first declare vnto me what Sacraments be.

What Sacraments be.

*Mat.* They be signes and Sacramentall rites, ordained of God in the Church, to bee adioyned to the preaching of the Word, that the promise of Christ made in it, may be confirmed in vs more and more.

*Theoph.* Why are those signes and sacramentall rites called Sacraments?

*Mat.* The ancient Teachers of the Christian Church, called them by this name, in respect of the affinity or nearnesse betweene them and a Sacrament, that is to say, that solemne oath, by the which souldiers bound themselves to the Emperour or chiefe Captaine.

*Theoph.* Shew me the affinity or agreement.

*Mat.* First, as souldiers when they receiued their pay, bound themselves to the Emperour by solemne oath, to liue and die vnder his gouernment: so wee when wee are partakers of the signes, which God hath appointed in his Church,

Church,

Church, by the which he bestoweth vpon vs spiritual gifts, doe binde our selues to him by the same oath. Moreouer, as souldiers whē they tooke vpon them this oath, receiued the Emperoues badge; that it might appeare, they had giuen themselues to him, and were become his: so also we, when we are publicly partakers of the Sacraments which God hath instituted in his Church, doe take vpon vs as it were, the ensigne or armes of Christ, that it may be known we serue God, and professe true religion.

*Theoph.* I vnderstand the reason of the Word. Now let vs come to the thing it selfe, The Sacraments, thou saidst, were ordained of God, for confirmation of the promise made by God, through Christ, in his word. What is that promise?

*Mat.* It is expounded of Christ himselfe, in these words, So God loued the world, that he gaue his onely begotten Sonne, that whosoever beleueth in him should not perish, but haue life cuerlasting. Iohn. 3. 16

The Sacraments therefore bee as it were visible pledges of the loue of God towards vs, by the which wee are confirmed in it. But, because that loue is grounded in Christ alone, the Sacraments represent vnto vs no other thing then the vnion and fellowshipp that we haue with him and his gifts.

*Theoph.* Of whom ought the Sacraments to bee administered?

*Mat.* Christ committed that office to them alone, to whom the preaching of the word is committed; without the which, neither ought the Sacraments to bee administered: for they be as scales thereof. Of whom the Sacraments ought to be administered.

*Theoph.* There is, therefore a very great likenesse and agreement betweene the Word and the Sacraments.

*Mat.* Very great. For by both of them God doth offer vnto vs Iesus Christ his Sonne, with all his gifts: and we are made partakers of them, if they be not refused of vs by vnbeleefe. This onely is the difference, that the preaching of the Word affecteth the hearing; but the Sacraments affect the other senses. Whereypon, of a certaine Father, they be most fitly called, Visible words. For, they doe present Christ and his benefits, as it were, before our

ties, and deliuer them into our hands: that, by those sundrie meanes, our faith might be confirmed, and we come so much the nearer to him, and feele the greater working of his Spirit within vs.

What conditions be required in Sacraments.

*Theoph.* What conditions bee required in the Sacraments?

*Mat.* Three: without which, they cannot be truly sacraments, but false.

*Theoph.* What are those conditions?

*Mat.* First, that they be ordained of God.

Secondly, that there bee a commandement of God, whereby we may vse them.

Thirdly, that there bee also a certaine promise; by the which it be assured, that we shall be partakers of the things that are represented by them.

*Theoph.* Why say you, it is necessary that they be ordained of God?

Why the first condition.

*Mat.* Because, as there is none besides himselfe, which can assure vs of the loue hee beareth towards vs in Christ: so is there not any man that may ordaine visible signes to confirme it. Moreover, in the institution it selfe, there bee three things to be noted.

1. The signes and sacramentall rites.
2. The spirituall and inuisible things, signified by those signes.
3. The analogie or agreement of the signes, with the things signified.

*Theoph.* I acknowledge it to be necessarie, that sacraments be ordained of God; but, I desire to vnderstand, why this also is necessarie, that there should be a commandement of God, to the intent we may vse them?

Why the second condition.

*Mat.* Because nothing is to bee done in the Church of God except there bee first the expresse commandement of God (who in it is Lord and Master): especially when the question is of things that concerne our saluation; such as the sacraments be.

*Theoph.* Why is it againe required, that there be a promise annexed?

Why the third condition.

*Mat.* Because vnlesse there be a promise, the sacraments shall be vnprofitable vnto vs. Now, that promise which on the



the behalfe of God hath the effect, is as it were the soule of the Sacraments, whereupon all their force and efficacy dependeth; and not vpon the holynesse or worthinesse of him of whom they be ministred, or vpon the vertue of some words pronounced. Therefore, without that promise, the Sacraments shall be nothing else but vaine and fruitlesse ceremonies.

*Theoph.* Thinkest thou that the Sacraments, if they be ministred of some wicked man and hipocrite, haue as much efficacie and force, as if they were ministred by some good man;

*Mat.* I thinke it: so, as on our part, we bring nothing to hinder it. As good seed, if it finde good ground, will beare fruit, notwithstanding it bee sown of some naughtie and wicked man. For the vertue of it hangeth not vpon the sower (as neither doe the Sacraments vpon the Minister) but vpon the blessing and grace of God only.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the number of the Sacraments: How many be there in the Christian Church?

*Mat.* Two: namely, Baptisme and the Lords Supper.

*Theoph.* Seeing they declare vnto vs one thing, as also the word doth (namely, the loue of God towards vs in Christ) what is the cause that they be two in number?

*Mat.* Because, by Baptisme, God doth witnesse, that we be receiued of him into his couenant, through the communication of Christ and his gifts: but by the supper he auoucheth, that we are retained and kept in it, till we be receiued into the heauenly life. And for this cause Baptisme is onely once ministred, but the Supper often times.

*Theoph.* Declare this reason to me more at large.

*Mat.* Yet, to me it seemeth easie. For, seeing Baptisme is the assured conueiance vnto vs of the couenant made with vs in Christ, if it should be iterated or vsed the second time, or oftner, it were all one as if we said, that God had abrogated or disanulled the former couenant, to ordaine or appoint another: which indeed is altogether contrary to the very nature, truth, and constancie of God. For the Apostle saith: With him there is no changing, or shadow of alteration. But, concerning the Supper, it is altogether required, both for edifying and for comfort, that

vpon whom  
dependeth  
the efficacy  
of the Sacra-  
ments.  
The number  
of the Sacra-  
ments, is 2.

Iames. 1. 17

it bee oft repeated and vsed of vs: seeing that (such is the weaknesse of our faith) wee doe every moment call into doubt whether God will continue in his loue towards vs, or no; especially, when we looke into our many sinnes, for the which we are indeed worthy to bee excluded by him. But, God would assure vs of his loue, by this Sacrament: in the which hee doth both offer and exhibite (or giue) Iesus Christ vnto vs, with his treasures; in whom alone, as hath bene said, that couenant and loue hath the foundation.

Whether the  
Sacraments  
be necessary  
to saluation

*Theoph.* I will yet demand of thee one question generally pertaining to the Sacraments, before wee begin the particular exposition of them both, whether are they so necessarie to saluation, that no man can bee saued without partaking of them?

*Mat.* It is a most absurd opinion of those, who thinke that God hath tied his grace to the Sacraments: for they be only for this end ordained, that the grace and fauour, yeilded vs before in Christ, should bee confirmed and ratified. Therefore it was most excellently said of an ancient Father; That the want of baptisme did not condemne but the contempt of it.

Bernard, ep.  
77.  
Mat. 16. 16

*Theoph.* But Christ saith; Whosoever beleueith and is baptized, shall be saued. Out of which words it seemeth may be gathered, that Christ determineth Baptisme to bee necessary to saluation, no lesse than faith. It seemeth also, that the same may be gathered concerning the supper, out of that which Christ himselfe said in another place; Verily verily, I say vnto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, ye haue no life in you.

Ioh. 6. 53.

*Mat.* In the first place, I will answer to those things which thou saidst of Baptisme. And I affirme, that in that place Christ doth not set down the necessity of baptisme; but rather sheweth what that true faith is, by the which wee are saued; namely, that it is not dead and hidden, but liuely, and declared by outward confession, so that the beleeuers doe ioine themselues to the Church, and be partakers of the preaching of the word & administration of the Sacraments: whereunto that saying of Paul ought to bee referred; Wee beleuee with the heart, to righteousnes; and confesse with the mouth, to saluation. And, that this is the minde

Rom. 10. 10

minde of Christ, it is gathered by the member following: for he saith; But whosoever beleueth not, shall bee condemned. For if this had beene his meaning, that no man could haue beene saued without baptisme, he would haue said thus; But whosoever shall not beleue, or shall not bee baptized, shall be condemned. Seeing therefore hee saith, that vnbeleefe is the cause of condemnation, by the contrary he meaneth, that faith is sufficient to saluation; which he himselfe often times confirmeth when he saith; He that beleueth in the Sonne, hath life euerlasting; but they that beleue not in the Sonne, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. Concerning the other place, of eating the flesh of Christ and drinking his blood, he doth not here intreat particularly of the supper; but generally of the vnion that we ought to haue with his bodie; which indeede is altogether necessarie to saluation, as hath bene fully proued by vs in the first booke. But that vnion is no lesse wrought by the word apprehended in faith, than it is by the Sacraments: as hath beene said already.

Iohn. 3. 63  
& 5. 24. & 6. 4.

### CHAP. III.

*Of Baptisme: by the which God testifieth that wee are receiued of him into couenant; in that hee doth communicate Christ Iesus vnto vs together with his benefits.*

THEOPHILVS.

**N**OW we are to weigh those two Sacraments each by it selfe; and in both, those three conditions are to bee searched out, that are required to make them truly Sacraments. Let vs therefore begin with Baptisme. What is the institution of it?

*Mat.* First indeede, it was instituted of God by the minister of *Iohn Baptist*, who thereupon had his name. Afterward it was dedicated and sanctified of Christ in his owne body, when he would be baptized of him, and when hee commanded the Apostles to baptize.

The institution of Baptisme.

*Theoph.* Let vs see those three things which thou saidst were required in the lawfull institution of a Sacrament; namely:

1. The signe and Sacramentall rites.
2. The signification of them,

3. The

The signe.

3. The likenesse and agreement betweene both.

*Mat.* The signe of this Sacrament is w ater, which signifieth the blood of Christ; that is, the force of his death: because it hath that effectuall working, in cleansing our soules from the filthinesse of sinne, which materiall water hath in cleansing our bodies. Thereupon this Sacrament hath the name of Baptisme: for it signifieth a rinsing or washing away. Now thou hast the signe.

The Sacramentall rite.

But the Sacramentall rite is; that he which is to be baptized, be sprinkled with water, or dipped in it: which was vsed in former times; and by it two things was signified vnto vs:

1. First, that our soules are sprinkled with the blood of Christ, that is, bee indeed partakers of the merit of his death: by the which we obtaine full forgiuenesse of all our sinnes.

Tit. 3. 5.

2. Secondly, that we bee regenerated into a new life. Therefore Baptisme is of *Paul* called the Bath of regeneration. By which words, those two gifts of God that wee obtaine in baptisme, are excellently noted.

*Theoph.* How can the sprinkling of water bee a signe or token of our regeneration?

*Mat.* The Scripture is wont to set downe two parts of it: namely, the mortification of death of the old man, and the rising againe of the new man, as it hath been said of vs in his place. But this mortification, which hath the force and working from the death and buriall of Christ, is most fitly represented by the sprinkling of water. For it is all one as if our old man being wounded to the death, or euen swallowed vp of death it selfe, were buried with Christ.

Then withall followeth the resurrection of the new man, which hangerth vpon the resurrection of Christ; and is represented by the water making cleane: for by it is signified, that together with him we doe rise from the graue of death to become new creatures.

Mat 28. 19.  
The commandment and promise,

*Theoph.* There bee yet behinde the promise and commandement of this Sacrament.

*Mat.* The words of Christ, set downe by *Mathew*, doe contain both: Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost.

*Theoph.*

*Theoph.* The commandement I see, but not the promise.

*Mat.* It is contained vnder the commandement. For, <sup>The words in</sup> when any is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Baptisme <sup>ex-</sup> Holy Ghost, it is as if it were said vnto him; By this visible <sup>pounded.</sup> signe I do assure thee, that all thy sinnes are washed away, and thy selfe regenerated, not by any vertue or force that is in me, or in this water wherewith thou art sprinkled; but by the mercy of the heauenly Father, who, for this purpose, doth by the power of the holy Ghost, communicate vnto thee Christ Iesus his Sonne, with all his benefits, and vniteth thee vnto him, so as thou art made partaker of him. Seeing therefore Christ commandeth, that these things should be preached, it is not to be doubted, but that he promisseth the thing it selfe. Baptisme therefore is giuen vs of God, as it were writings sealed; by the which he assureth vs of the full forgiuenesse of all our sinnes.

*Theoph.* What sinnes thinkest thou be done away by Baptisme? onely originall sinne?

*Mat.* That indeede is first done away; not that it doth not remaine in vs: but because it is not imputed. The same also we may affirme of other sinnes; which be effects <sup>What sinnes</sup> of it. For they bee put away by this sacrament: they bee <sup>be put away</sup> put away (I say) both they that bee past, and those that are <sup>in Baptisme,</sup> to come. The words therefore deliuered of the Minister in Baptisme, by the commandement of God (namely, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost) should alwaies be in our eares, euen vntill the last gasp: and by them ought wee to be assured of the full forgiuenesse of our sinnes. For the blood of Christ, in the which wee are once baptized, is neuer drawne cleane out; but is alwaies fresh, as the Apostle speaketh, that is, full of efficacie and strength, to the continuall washing away of all our filthinesse and iniquities.

*Theoph.* Thou saidst in the exposition of this promise, that in this sacrament, the Father did communicate Christ and his benefits vnto vs. But both the signe of it, and the sacramentall rites, doe only represent vnto vs the participation, or fellowship which we haue with his death; but not the communion we haue with his body.

*Mat.* We haue taught in the first booke, that no man <sup>can</sup>

Heb. 10. 10, 11  
12. 14. & 9. 13.  
14.  
Of our vnion  
with Christ

can bee partakers of Christ benefits, which is not made one with him. The one therefore followeth vpon the other. By these things therefore it is proued, that by Baptisme we be truly made partakers both of Christs body, and of his benefits; which also *Paul* confirmeth in these words; So many of you as bee baptized into Christ, haue put on Christ.

Gal. 3. 27

*Theoph.* I come againe to the institution of Baptisme, wherein Christ saith to his Apostles; Goe, teach all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost. What is the cause that Christ commandeth his Apostles to teach first, before they baptize?

Mat. 28. 19

Why Christ  
would haue  
the Word  
preached be-  
fore Baptisme  
be admini-  
stred.

*Mat.* The reason is most euident. For, seeing the Sacraments be as Seales of the Word, it is fit that euery one should be first instructed in the doctrine, before he be baptized or confirmed in the same doctrine; excepting onely the children of the faithfull, of whom there is another reason, which causeth that they are to bee baptized presently after they be borne.

Baptizing of  
children.

*Theoph.* What is that reason?

Exod. 20.

*Mat.* Because God hath promised, in the person of *Abraham*, that he will be the God of the faithfull, and of their seed. Which selfe same thing God confirmeth in the Law when he saith; That he is such a one as sheweth mercy to a thousand generations of those that loue him, and keepe his commandments. Seeing therefore the children of beleeuers appertaine to the couenant of God, it is not to be doubted, but that the Sacrament of it, namely Baptisme, is to be ministred to them. Which is againe confirmed by the example of the Israelites, who by the commandement of God circumcised their children the eight day.

The agree-  
ment be-  
twene Cir-  
cumcision &  
Baptisme.

*Theoph.* Is there the same reason of Baptisme, as of Circumcision?

*Mat.* Yea, altogether; and in very deede it is one and the selfe same Sacrament, as concerning the substance. For, after the coming of Christ, Baptisme came in place of Circumcision; and by it the gifts of God were not diminished, but increased vnto vs. For, as the Sacraments of the new Testament haue a farre more easie and plaine signification then the Sacraments of the old Testament;



flament; so the force and efficacy of them is farre greater.

*Theoph.* But what profit can there come by Baptisme to a child without understanding and knowledge?

*Mat.* Much, if thou consider both the glory of God, the comfort of the parents, and finally, the edification and salvation of the child.

What profit  
commeth by  
baptizing of  
children.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* First of all, God is glorified, for that hee sheweth himselfe true in his promises, by the which it is, that hee hath mercy vpon the faithfull, euen to the thousand generation. Moreouer, the parent himselfe is wonderfully comforted, and confirmed in the loue of God, when he seeth, that not onely he himselfe is beloued of God; but also that the loue and grace of God is deriued vnto his children: which God assureth him of, by that visible signe. Finally, concerning the childe, it hath a marvellous benefite bestowed vpon it, in that he doth so soone obtaine the partaking of Christ and his benefites; by the which hee hath the inheritance of eternall life. By the remembrance whereof, when hee commeth to age, he is wonderfully confirmed in the loue and feare of God; namely, when he calleth to mind, that hee is so much esteemed of God, that euen from his comming into this world, he obtained fellowship in his couenant.

*Theoph.* But how can a yong child by Baptisme be partaker of Christ and his benefites? seeing it is certaine, that he lacketh faith: without which, thou affirmedst before, that no man can haue that fellowship.

*Mat.* That indeed is true in those that be of yeares; and in such as for their age may beleue. But God worketh in the children of the faithfull, belonging to his couenant, another way vnknown to vs. Whom also the Apostle doubteth not to call holy, insomuch as they cannot perish, seeing they haue in them a sprigge of faith: which doubtlesse, when time shall come, bringeth forth the fruites, in some sooner, and in others latter; as it shall seeme good to the Lord to call them.

How the  
children of  
beleuers  
lacking faith  
be partakers  
of Christ.  
1. Cor 7. 14

*Theoph.* I doe now see, that the children of the godly are to bee baptized. Notwithstanding, I will propound one question more, before I goe from the speech which I haue begun,

How the children of the  
godly be born  
in originall  
sinne.  
Aug de pec.  
ca. meri. &  
remissi. 3  
cap. 18

begun. How can it be, that those children of the godly should be borne defiled with originall sinne? seeing their parents are purged of it.

*Mat. Augustine*, by an excellent similitude, answereth this question in these words; Like as chaffe, by the labour and great diligence of man, being seuered from the wheat, abideth notwithstanding in the fruit which groweth of that wheat thus cleansed: so sinne, whereof by Baptisme the parents are cleansed, abideth in those whom they haue begotten. Therefore our children, except they be borne again by a spirituall birth, cannot be accounted the children of God, nor heires of eternall life.

### CHAP. IIII.

*Of the Supper of the Lord; by the which God testifieth, that his Covenant is enlarged in vs, forasmuch as he maketh vs more and more partakers of Christ and his benefits.*

#### THEOPHILVS.

**H**itherto hath beene spoken of Baptisme: let vs now come to the Supper of the Lord, and let vs begin at the institution of it.

*Mat.* The Euangelists shew, that it was instituted of Christ the same night he was betraied, after that hee had supped, & had eatē the Paschall lamb, according to the Law.

*Theoph.* I thinke it was thereupon called Supper.

Of the word  
Supper, and  
the institution  
of it.

*Mat.* It is called Supper, of the Apostle, not so much for this cause, as to shew that it is indeede a spirituall Supper made by God vnto the faithfull; wherein he feedeth them with the body and blood of Iesus Christ, into the hope of eternall life.

*Theoph.* The three heads of the institution are to be examined of vs: namely,

1. The signes and sacramentall rites.
2. Their signification.
3. And finally, the likenesse or agreement betweene both.

The signes of  
the Supper.

*Mat.* The signes are bread and wine: which indeede do signifie the body and blood of Christ. Because the body and blood of Christ haue that force and efficacie in the feeding of our soules, which bread and wine haue in nourishing

riſing our bodies. And for this cauſe, Chriſt alſo called himſelfe the bread of life. Iohn 6. 48

*Theoph.* What difference makeſt thou betweene the bread and wine of the Supper, and the bread and wine which wee uſe for our ordinary meat and drinke ?

*Mat.* Truly none in the ſubſtance; but in the uſe and miniſtring of the Supper : concerning which, this I hold, that the one are ſet before vs for the nourishment of the body : but the other be ordained of God to be ſignes of the body and bloud of Chriſt. The ſame alſo is to be thought of the water of Baptiſme.

*Theoph.* Why be there two ſignes in the Supper ?

*Mat.* To the end we might know, that in Chriſt we haue whole and perfect ſpirituall food ; that is, whatſoeuer is requiſite to our ſaluation. It was alſo done for a more perfect remembrance of his death. For the wine, which is the ſigne of his bloud, doth as it were repreſent it before our eies.

Why there is a double ſigne in the ſupper.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the ſacramentall rite, and the ſignification of it.

*Mat.* It is double, or two-fold.

1. For the one reſpecteth the Miniſter.
2. The other him which is partaker of the Supper.

The ſacramentall rite of the ſupper.

The firſt is this, to take the bread and breake it: Whereby is ſignified, that Chriſt with ſuffering, was broken for our redemption : which himſelfe declared in theſe words, This is my body, that is broken for you. Then to giue it being broken, and to deliuer the wine in the cup. By which rites is meant, that God doth offer and giue Chriſt vnto vs, together with all his benefites. The latter rite is, that he which commeth to the Supper, ſhould receiue, eate, and drinke the bread and wine giuen vnto him. Which indeede doe ſignifie, that in the Supper we do truly receiue Chriſt, eate his body and drinke his bloud ; by the which we are nourished into the hope of eternall life, if wee doe not put him from vs through vnbelieve.

What the miniſters muſt doe in miniſtring the ſupper.

What they muſt do that come to the Lords Table.

*Theoph.* What is it to eate the body of Chriſt ?

*Mat.* To be ſo neerly ioyned with his body, as the meat which we eate is with our owne body.

*Theoph.* What is it to drinke the bloud of the Lord ?

*Mat.* To be as truly partaker of the death and paſſion

on

on, as if we our selues had suffered the same. And this doth our sauour Christ meane, when he saith; Verily, verily, I say vnto you, Except you eate the flesh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, you haue no life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternall life. But this is to be remembred (which we spake before, in the Chapter of Faith) namely, that by the merit of Christs death (represented in the holy Supper, by Wine; that signifieth his blood) the Scripture vnderstandeth all the benefits of Christ; but, for the most part, maketh mention of that onely, because it hath as it were the first and chiefe place.

*Theoph.* Let vs goe forward. What vnderstandest thou by that spirituall foode, which thou saidst came by the eating of Christs body, and drinking his blood?

Our Spirituall  
foode in the  
Supper.

*Mat.* First peace of conscience: namely, because we are more and more assured of the forgiveness of our sinnes promised by Baptisme. Secondly, the daily growth and increase of the new man, begun in vs in our Baptisme, so as we haue power giuen vs to serue God better, and to resist the temptations that are wont to call vs away from his obedience: whereupon followeth an effect of this spirituall food; namely, that we are confirmed daily in the hope of eternall life. And by these things appeareth that which I haue said of the difference of the Sacraments; to wit, that Baptisme doth testify the beginning of our partaking with Christ and his benefits, and the Supper the continuance and increase thereof.

*Theoph.* Now let vs come to the Commandement and Promise of this Sacrament.

*Mat.* Both be added, presently after the word of institution: *Take, eate, drinke you all of this, do this in remembrance of me.* Lo there is the commandement: then the promise; *This is my body, This is my blood.* For the meaning of these words is as much, as if Christ had said; This bread and this wine doe so represent vnto you my body and blood, that they assure you, receiuing the visible signes, to bee indeede partakers of those things that be signified by them; namely, of my body and blood.

*Theoph.* But the words of Christ seeme not to haue that meaning;

meaning; but rather that the bread and wine are transubstantiated or turned into his body and blood.

*Mat.* The words themselves cannot beare it. For if Christ meant to haue signified that, hee would haue said thus, Let this be made my body, or let it be changed into my body.

*Theoph.* What then were the meaning of Christs words; if they were to be expounded according to the letter, as they say?

*Mat.* They should rather signifie; that his body and blood were changed into bread and wine. For if any saw the pillar of salt, whereinto Lo's wife was turned, out of all doubt hee would say; This thing, that is this pillar of salt is Lo's wife; that he might declare that shee was turned into that pillar; and such as heard those words, would take them in that sense.

*Theoph.* I perceiue indeed that those words if they were to be expounded literally, do properly signifie as thou saiest. Howbeit, that sense agreeth not to the words of Christ.

*Mat.* Thou thinkest rightly: and that former agreeth nothing more, namely, whereon transubstantiation is builded: which indeede the very words doe not beare: yea rather out of it foure absurdities doe follow.

*Theoph.* Rehearse them.

*Mat.* 1. First, If the bread and wine be turned into the body and blood of Christ, there shall be no signes in the holy Supper; and therefore it shall not be a Sacrament: which indeede cannot be without a visible signe.

A confutation of the absurdities following vpon popish transubstantiation.

2. Secondly, Christs blood shall be seperated from his body: which is most absurd, and impossible to be. Moreouer, the body of Christ should be infinite: and therefore he should not be a very man; neither should he haue truly ascended into heauen. By which opinion, the chiefe points of our faith should be ouerthrowne.

*Theoph.* Some do object, that Christs body is now glorified, and at one and the same time may be in diuers places.

*Mat.* This obiection is vaine. For, when Christ instituted the Supper, his body was not glorified. Adde hereunto that the glorification hath not taken from it the nature of a true body; but hath taken away the infirmity and weakness.

Q

ness

Acts 4. 21  
Acts 1. 11

ness of it: which was very well obserued of one of the Fathers. For this cause PETER saith; The heauen must holde him, yntill the time of the repairing of all things. And the Angels, in another place; So shall hee come, as you haue seene him goe into heauen.

*Theoph.* Shew the fourth absurdity.

*Mat.* It is this; that the wicked and hypocrits, comming to the Supper, should truly partake of the body and blood of Christ: which verily were nothing else but to ioine God and Sathan together. Moreouer, contrary vnto that which the Scripture expressly teacheth, the vnbeleeuers should be saued. For Christ affirmeth, \* Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath euerlasting life.

\* Iohn 9. 54.  
Against those  
who say, the  
reprobate, in  
the supper be  
partakers of  
Christs body  
and blood.

1. Cor. 11. 29.

*Theoph.* But Christ vnderstandeth those, which eate his flesh, and drinke his blood worthily. For the Apostle saith, He that eateth this bread, and drinketh this cup vnworthily, eateth and drinketh to himselfe damnation.

2. Iohn 5. 12

*Mat.* The Apostle saith not, who so eateth the body of Christ, and drinketh the blood of Christ vnworthily, but he that eateth the bread, and drinketh the cup. For Christ should offer his body to be profaned, if hee made the vnworthy partakers of it. Moreouer, his gifts be vnseperably ioyned with his person: and therefore it is impossible, that any should communicate with his body, but the same also must be partaker of all his benefites, and euen of euerlasting life. For this cause IOHN saith; He that hath the Son, hath life: Hee that hath not the Sonne of God, hath not life. Those foure absurdities, reckoned vp by vs, doe most manifestly overthrow the opinion of transubstantiation: which is also disprooued by experience it selfe; forasmuch as the bread and wine of the Supper, if they be kept long, doe corrupt. Whereupon it is plaine, that their substance is not changed.

*Th.* I do indeed perceiue, that the words of Christ do not establish transubstantiation, or the turning of the signes into the things signified: both because the words themselues cannot beare it; & especially in this, that most grosse absurdities doe follow thereupon. But by what arguments can you proue, that the exposition brought by you, doth express the sense of Christs words, and that this was his meaning?

*Mat.*



*Mat.* Seeing there must be an exposition of them, it is <sup>In a true ex-</sup> not to be doubted, but it ought to be true & proper, being <sup>position of</sup> such, as may be confirmed by the testimony of the holy <sup>Christ's words</sup> Scripture, & whereupon no absurdity followeth. But that <sup>in the Supper,</sup> which I haue brought is such: therefore it is true & proper. <sup>two things re-</sup> quired.

*Theoph.* If you proue these two points, you shall doubtlesse overcome.

*Mat.* First, that exposition is confirmed by the testimony <sup>1. Testimony</sup> of the holy Scripture. For *PAVL* thus expoundeth the <sup>of scripture</sup> words of *Christ*, instituting the Supper; The cup of blessing, which wee blesse, is it not the Communion of the <sup>confirmeth it,</sup> blood of *Christ*? The bread which we breake, is it not the <sup>1. Cor. 10. 16</sup> Communion of the body of *Christ*? Which words doe indeede signifie no other thing, but that wee should vnderstand the bread and wine to be most certaine signes of our Communion and fellowship with *Christ's* body and blood. And that doth altogether agree with my exposition. Moreover, these words, *THIS IS MY BODY*, are to haue the like exposition with these, *THIS IS MY BLOOD*: But *LVKE* expoundeth them thus, This cup is the new Testament in my blood, which is shed for you. The same exposition also did *PAVL* follow, repeating the words of the institution. And <sup>Luk. 11. 20</sup> this manner of speech can admit no other exposition (with- <sup>1. Cor. 11. 25</sup> out wresting the words) then this, That the wine offered in the cup, is a most sure pledge of the couenant, which God hath made with vs by the precious blood of *Christ*. The same therefore is to be said of the bread; namely, that it is a most sure pledge of the vñion which wee haue with the body of *Christ*.

*Th.* Concerning the first thing required in a true interpretation, thou hast satisfied me: let vs now come to the other.

*Mat.* Concerning the other, I affirmed, that the exposition which I brought, had no absurditie in it. For it hindereth not, but that wee may truly eate the body of *Christ*, <sup>2. No absurdity ensueth of it,</sup> and drinke his blood, to our saluation. Yea, the foure absurdities which I spake of euen now, be auoided.

For the signes retaine their owne nature.

The blood of *Christ* is not seperated from his body.

The truth of his humanitie, ascension, and sitting at the right hand of the Father, remaineth safe,

Finally, the vnbeleeuers are not partakers of his body and bloud.

*Theoph.* If that were the meaning of Christ, why did he not expresse it in plainer words, and lesse doubtfull?

Why Christ  
vsed those  
words, and no  
other in the  
institution of  
the Supper.

*Mat.* He could not expresse that promise, in fewer and more significant words. For if he had said, This is a pledge or signe of my body, there had bin no promise. It had therfore bin necessary for him to haue vsed long circumstance of words, after this manner; I auouch, that this bread, and this wine, doe represent vnto you my body and bloud, that as often as yee receiue these visibible signes, ye shall be truly and indeed partakers of the things, whereof they be signes. But this kind of speech had not bin of such force and weight as that is which he vseth; This is my bloud; for it comprehendeth al those things vnder it; but with a greater Maieſtie. And for this cause the holy Ghost vsed a like kinde of speech, in all the Sacraments of the old Testament: to wit, in that it giueth the name of the thing signified, to the signes themselves; to teach vs that the worthy receiuers be truly partakers of the thing signified.

The confir-  
mation of  
the former  
interpretati-  
on.

*Theoph.* Declare that vnto me particul arly, in some Sacraments of the old Church.

Gen. 17. 9. 10  
11.

*Mat.* First, God meaning to assure ABRAHAM and his posterity, that circumcision was vnto them a most certaine signe that they were reckoned in his couenant, calleth it his couenant. The same also saith MOSES of the Sacrament of the Pascheouer. For he calleth it the Lords Pascheouer, to giue them to vnderstand, that it was a most certaine token of the good will of God Whereof the Israelites had experience when the Angell destroyed the first borne of the Egyptians, and passed ouer their houses without touching them, whereof the pascheouer was a Sacrament.

Exod. 12. 11

*Theoph.* Indee these kinds of speaking do come somewhat neare to the words of Christ vsed in the institution of the holy Supper. But I demand; If there be any altogether like vnto them, and that haue the same meaning with that, which thou hast alleadged?

*Mat.* There be. For the Apostle, speaking of the Sacraments which the Fathers vsed in the wildernes, saith; that the rocke, that is, the water, which MOSES had (not with-

1. Cor. 10. 4

out

our miracle) brought out of stone, was Christ: to teach that it was vnto them a most effectuall Sacrament of the communion and fellowship which they had with Christ. For the same Apostle affirmeth; that the Fathers did eate the same spirituall meate with vs, and drinke the same spirituall drinke. Lo therefore a manner of speech altogether like to that which Christ vsed in the institution of the Supper; and which hath the same interpretation with that which I brought a little before. Yea and that more is, there is vse of this kind of speech, not onely in the Scripture, but also in our common talke. For, if a king will forgieue an offender the punishment of his faults, deliuering vnto him his letters patents, confirmed by his handwriting & seale, he will say; behold thy pardon. And yet he meaneth not, that the letters patents be his pardon, but onely a certaine testimonie of his pardon. And this similitude very excellently agreeth with the Sacraments; which be, as it were, scales of the word: as the Apostle testifieth, speaking of circumcision. For hee calleth it the seale of the righteousness of faith.

*Theoph.* I doe now see, that thy interpretation doth expresse the true meaning of Christs words. I do also grant, that, by those words, Christ assureth vs, that we are as verily partakers of his body and blood, as we do receiue the bread and wine. But how can that be? vnderstandest thou that his bodie is shut vp or inclosed in the bread, and his blood in the wine?

*Mat.* At no hand. For the words themselves cannot any way beare it. For, Christ must then haue said; My body is with this bread, and my blood is with this wine.

Secondly, wee should hold a carnall eating; which would lead vs to the three latter absurdities, reckened vp by vs, when we speake of transubstantiation; namely, that the blood of Christ should be seuered from his body; that his body should be infinite: and finally, that the wicked, comming to the Supper, should communicate with the body and blood of Christ, and consequently obtaine euermlasting life. Moreover, Christ himselfe doth teach the contrary. For vnto his Disciples, iudging the speech which he had of eating his body, to be hard, hee answereth thus;

Q 3

It

gives birth to  
od a third to  
which has a  
should not be

Rom. 4. 11.

Against the  
error of con-  
substantia-  
tion,

John. 6. 63.

It is the spirit that giueth life, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speake vnto you, are spirit and life. By which words, he declareth most evidently, that hee speaketh not of any carnall, but of a spirituall eating.

*Theoph.* You haue affirmed before, that Christ, in that place did not speake of the eating which is in the Supper, but of that which is spirituall by faith.

Of the eating  
of Christs body  
and drinking  
his blood.

*Mat.* As the Scripture doth set before vs one Christ, so it sheweth one way, how to eate his flesh and drinke his blood (that is, wherby we may be made one with him; that so we may bee partakers of all his benefits): and this is, spirituall by faith. Seeing therefore this spirituall eating is abundantly sufficient to our saluation, and is grounded vpon the word of God, it ouerthroweth that carnall eating, which men by the example of the Capernaïtes haue deuised to themselues: from the which also (if it could be) there were no other profite to be looked for, than that which we receiue by spirituall eating.

Therefore, albeit Christ, in that place, speaketh not of the Sacramentall eating, but of that, which is by receiuing the word in faith: neuerthelesse, it both may and ought to be referred vnto that; because it is one and the same eating. And therefore whatsoever is saide of the one, must necessarily agree to the other. And doubtlesse, seeing the question is of the food of our soules, which is spirituall, and the meat is spirituall, it followeth of necessitie, that the eating is spirituall, euen as we cannot nourish our bodies, except earthly food bee visibly and sensibly eaten, for the preservation of this life.

*Theoph.* What dost thou properly vnderstand, by spirituall eating?

How we that  
bee in the  
earth, be partakers  
of  
Christ his  
body which  
is in heauen.

*Mat.* That Christ, although (concerning his humane nature) he goe not out of the heauens, doth yet by the power of the holy Ghost communicate vnto vs his body and blood, and that by faith: which is in stead of a spirituall hand and mouth, by which we receiue him, and apply him vnto vs; as hath bene more at large declared of vs, in the Chapter of faith. And this is the spirituall eating of Christ by faith, being opposite to the carnall eating: which some haue dreamed to bee with the bodily mouth; so that the

very

very substance of the body and blood of Christ is eaten with it: which is a most absurd fiction. And yet no marvell though some haue fallen into it: for, as the spirituall man, when he heareth that the body of Christ is to be eaten, & his blood to be drunken, vnderstandeth it (according to his spirituall hunger & thirst) spirituallly; and therefore prepareth his heart by faith: so contrariwise, the carnall man hath no other than carnall cogitations in all this businesse; & therefore prepareth the mouth of his body, to deuoure Christ. But the saying of *AUSTIN* is notable, Why doest thou make ready thy teeth and belly? Beleuee, and thou hast eaten.

*Theoph.* But how can it be, that Christ, which is in heauen, should truly communicate his body vnto vs, that bee conuersant vpon the earth?

*Mat.* That ought not to seeme marvellous vnto vs: for if the Sunne, being a creature without life, doe by his beames communicate the effect & power of it vnto vs that liue vpon the earth; by a far stronger reason may Christ, which is the Sun of righteousness, by the immeasurable power of the Holy Ghost, truly make vs partakers of his body, in the Supper; to whom it is no harder to ioine together things farre distant a sunder, than those that be most nigh. Which indeed appeareth euen by this, that it ioyneth together all the faithfull (albeit they be scattered here and there) into one body, whereof Christ is the head. That is also shadowed in the Supper: for the Apostle saith, We which are many, *1. Cor. 10. 17* are one body: for all of vs are partakers of one bread.

*Theoph.* But some obiekt, that if in the Supper of the Lord we do only spirituallly and by faith communicate with the body of Christ, there is no great profit of it, seeing that is daily fulfilled in vs, by the ministerie of the word receiued by faith.

An obiection  
against spiri-  
tuall eating

*Mat.* It followeth not. For there be diuers helps ordained of God to the same end; namely, to procure or further our saluation, in his Sonne, through the holy Ghost; euen as a good Physition procureth the health of the Patient committed to his trust, by sundry meanes. Wherefore although by receiuing the word in faith, Christ be already spirituallly eaten of vs: yet neuertheless this is more and

more

more performed in the Supper: through the which the Lord vs worketh according to his promise, and so furnisheth vs with the power of the holy Ghost, that our hearts be more abundantly inflamed with his loue, and confirmed in the hope of euerlasting life.

*Theoph.* Seeing then it is certaine, that we are not otherwise partakers of Christ in the Supper, than spiritually and by faith; it followeth, that all they which come to it without faith, haue no fruit or benefit by it.

*Mat.* That indeed is most true. For, by their vnbeleefe they refuse Christ, whom God offered to them in the Supper. Wherefore, they be partakers only of the signes, and that to their condemnation: seeing that (so much as in them is) they prophane and vnhallo w that most holy spirituall banquet, prouided of God for his children; whiles they come vnto it not furnished with that most precious garment, namely, faith: whereby we are iustified before God, made the sonnes of God, and be accounted worthy to sit downe at his table. For this cause the Apostle commandeth that euery one should proue himselfe, and so eate of that bread, and drinke of that cup.

1. Cor. 11. 20.

*Theoph.* What is the way whereby a man ought to proue himselfe?

*Mat.* Let him try himselfe, and see whether he haue faith which shall be easie to perceiue by repentance, as it hath beene said of vs in the proper place. Whosoeuer therefore is not any way touched with repentance, is altogether vnworthy to be admitted to the Supper of the Lord.

*Theoph.* But what thinkest thou of him, that hath some feeling of repentance, though it be very little?

*Mat.* If it bee so little, that it shew not it selfe by returning to God, and by amendment of life, it ought to bee suspected. For, true repentance, albeit it be weake, doth alwaies discover it selfe by some outward workes.

In the meane time, it is not to be doubted, but that as our faith is alwaies very weake, so it standeth with our repentance. And this doubtlesse is so, euen in the most regenerate, although diuersly; for in some it is more, in others it is lesse. Notwithstanding, it is so farre off, that this weakenesse should driue vs from the holy Supper, that it ought



ought rather to spurre vs forward to come vnto it, that by it wee may bee strengthened in faith and repentance; euen as the sicke man, the weaker hee knoweth himselfe to bee, should so much the more diligently seeke for meate, both to receiue nourishment thereby, and also to repaire his strength. Therefore they onely bee vnworthy to come to the Lords Supper, who delight in their sins, and go on in them. For, seeing they be dead in sinne, they neither are worthe, nor haue further vse of this spirituall sustenance.

*Theoph.* But if such men come to the Supper, what thinke you is to be done?

*Mat.* If their vnworthinesse be secret and hidden, they ought to be left to the iudgement of God, who will one day take vengeance vpon them: but if it be knowne, they ought (by order of Ecclesiasticall discipline) to be put back from it.

*Theoph.* What call you Ecclesiasticall discipline?

*Mat.* The order instituted by God in the Church, specially for two ends. The first is, that the Ministerie may be vpheld, that (as **PAVL** saith) all things may bee done in the Church decently and in order. Also, that vpon appointed daies and at certaine times Sermons may be made, and the Sacraments administred, and with due reuerence frequented and resorted vnto, by such as haue ioyned and betaken themselves to the Christian Church. The other end is, that the conuersation and doctrine of euery one may be looked into; that such as haue giuen offence may be corrected and delt with, according to the degrees prescribed by Christ: yea, if they be stubborne, to bee at length ex-communicated, that is, cut off from the body of the Church; lest God himselfe be slandered, and the flocke (by their euill example) infected. Moreouer, that (if it be possible) they may (as **PAVL** teacheth) by that shame, be called to repentance.

Ecclesiasticall  
discipline.  
1. Cor. 14.40

Mat. 18. 13  
16. 17.

*Theoph.* Of whom ought that Ecclesiasticall discipline to be exercised?

*Mat.* Of the Pastors of the Church, to whom are to be adioyned certaine Seniors or Ancients for this end, as necessitie shall require, chosen of the Church.

THE

# THE SUMME OF ALL Christian Religion: Declared in a threefold method or order.

THEOPHILVS.

**T**Hankes be to God, from whom we haue receiued this benefit, that wee haue happily in my iudgement handled all the parts of Christian Religion. Now I would that thou shouldest draw the chiefe heads of it into a short sum, before we make an end of this our disputation.

*Mat.* That abridgement or Breuiary may bee done in a triple or threefold method: so as the first may be profitable to the instruction of the godly; the other to their comfort; & the third to consist of both, by making an opposition or contrarietie of true religion, with all other religions.

*Theoph.* Goe to therefore, declare the first.

*Mat.* It shall declare the order of the whole booke: which indeed may be brought into five heads or principall points: the dependencie, coherence, or linking together whereof sheweth, what certaintie and truth is in euery one of them, and so in all Christian Religion, in such sort as it hath bene laid forth by vs.

*Theoph.* Rehearse those chiefe points.

*Mat.* The first intreateth of God.

The second of man.

The third of Christ.

The fourth of faith.

The fift of the Holy Ghost.

*Theoph.* It shall be so much the more easie to remember them, because ech of them may be applied to ech finger of the hand. Declare them therefore to me in order, and shew me the coherence and agreement which thou diddest attribute vnto them.

*Mat.* First, we must hold this principle, That God (seeing he is perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull) doth not only shew his mercie, but doth also declare his iustice.

This foundation being laid, it followeth, that man (who  
of

The first  
Epitome.

God.

Mat.

of his owne nature is a wretched sinner) cannot be saued from eternal death, which he hath deserued; except he haue some fit meane, whereby the perfect iustice of God may be Christ satisfied. But there can be found no other meane, besides the merit of Christs death. For by it the wrath of God being appeased, there is a way made for vs vnto his mercy, & therefore vnto eternall life. But Christ shall profite vs nothing, except we be members of his body, and so be partakers of his benefits. And both of these we obtaine by faith; Faith which indeed sheweth it selfe by good workes; and namely by praier. Finally, the holy Ghost worketh this faith in the The holy heartsof the godly, by the preaching of the word, & confir- Ghost meth & keepeth it, as wel by that preaching as by the vse of the sacraments, till at length he bring vs to euertlasting life.

*Theoph.* This is an excellent Breuiarie: for, in most few words and fit order, it containeth the summe of Christian doctrine, for the instruction of the godly. Now therefore <sup>The second</sup> let vs come to the other: which thou saidst was profitable <sup>Epitome,</sup> for the comfort of the faithfull.

*Mat.* That shall be set out, in an order diuers from the former: but it may be also brought into five heads.

1. The first is of repentance.
2. The second of faith.
3. The third of Christ.
4. The fourth of God.
5. The fifth of eternall life.

And these also be ioyned together betweene themselves by a most close coherence and neere band, to assure the godly of their saluation.

*Theoph.* Shew me that band, or coherence.

*Mat.* First, whosoever doth truly repent (and that is <sup>Repentance</sup> easily perceiued, namely, when we serue God frō the heart) hee hath faith. But whosoever hath faith, is partaker of Faith, Christ and his benefits. And againe, whosoever is partaker of Christ and his benefits, is iustified and made the child <sup>Christ,</sup> of God. But whosoever is iustified and made the child of God, shall be deliuered from condemnation, & made partaker of eternall life. Whereupon it followeth, that hee, <sup>Eternall life,</sup> which by good works is assured of his repentance, shall neuer perish, but haue life euertlasting. And those five staires

or steps may be in stead of a ladder, by the which we may climbe vp euen into heauen, to vnderstand certainly whether our names be written in the booke of life, or not: but the first onely is hard.

*Theoph.* Why so?

*Mat.* Because there is no little labour to be bestowed in the denial of sinne, that we may serue God from the heart but when a man by the grace of God hath profited so far, there is very little labour behinde. From hence it is, that sometimes the Scripture attributeth our saluation vnto works, namely, to note vnto vs this order. As, when hee saith: God will giue to every one according to his works. They shall come forth that haue done well, to the resurrection of life. Whereunto also that ought to be referred, which is said in another place; Blessed are they that walke in the Law of the Lord.

Rom. 2.6

Iohn. 5. 26

Psal. 119. 1

*Theoph.* There is one doubt behinde within me, which seemeth to let that the godly cannot be sure of their saluation: namely, because thereunto is required, that they bee sure of perseuerance and continuing to the end; without which, Christ affirmeth that none can be saued. Neuertheless, there be many found, which in shew begin happily, yea also haue long continued in the knowledge and confession of the truth; who notwithstanding doe so fall from it, that they neuer returne.

*Mat.* It is true indeed, that perseuerance is necessarie to saluation: howbeit, the Apostle affirmeth, that he which hath begun the good worke in vs, will perfect the same euen vnto the day of Christ; that is, to the end of the battell. And concerning them that fall away, the words of the Apostle be manifest; They went out from vs, but they were not of vs; for if they had been of vs, they should haue continued with vs. But this is done, that it might appeare, they all were not of vs. Moreouer, they be those of whom Christ speaketh, when he saith; They which receiued the seede (that is, the doctrine of the truth of the Gospell) in stony ground, are they which heare the word, and straightway receiue it with ioy; but they haue no root in themselves, but are for a time; and when trouble or persecution ariseth for the words sake, they are by and by offended.

Phil. 1. 6.

1. Iohn. 3. 19

Mat. 13. 21.  
22.

offended. But they which receiued the seede; amongst thornes, are such as heare the Word; but the cares of this world, and the deceitfulnesse of riches choake the Word, and it is made vnfruitfull.

*Theoph.* This therefore is your meaning; that they which so fall from the profession of the Gospell, that they neuer returne againe, did neuer truly beleue the Gospell: although for a time, they did in outward shew make profession of it.

*Mat.* You thinke right. For true faith is seated in the heart, and there taketh root by the effectuall working of the holy Ghost: which he bestoweth not vpon any, but those that be chosen of God, in Iesus Christ, vnto saluation. And, by this meanes, he openeth vnto vs the counsell of God (which wee otherwise know not) concerning fauouring vs. Whosoever therefore by their true repentance, bee assured of their faith, ought not to make doubt either of perseverance, or of eternall life.

*Theoph.* You haue touched a doctrine, which to some seemeth difficult and hard. Neuerthelesse, I would wee might speake a little of it. For I account it among those things, which the more deeply they be searched into, the more they be obscured and darkned. First, shew me what is the foundation of it.

*Mat.* First, it may be gathered out of the whole Christian doctrine; but especially out of the doctrine of iustification by faith, and of regeneration; by which we are taught, that our saluation is freely bestowed vpon vs in Iesus Christ, and that it cannot spring from our selues. Seeing therefore God bestoweth not so great a benefit vpon euery one, it followeth necessarily, that they which obtaine it were chosen of God himselfe, according to the good pleasure of his will; and therefore that the eternall election of God cannot be taken away, but that together with it the principall foundations of Christian Religion, shall be overthrowne, and our saluation made voide.

*Theoph.* Is there not some expresse testimony of it in the Scripture?

*Mat.* There is: and not onely one, but more; and those most plaine. Among the which, the words of PAUL, writing

Of the eternall election of God.

By what doctrine it is proued.

Prooued by testimony of Scripture.

Eph. 1.4-5. 13  
14

to the Ephesians, be the chiefe; God hath chosen vs in Christ, before the foundations of the World were laid: making knowne vnto vs the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which hee had purposed in himselfe. And we are sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.

*Theoph.* A few words indeed: but such, whereby the Apostle bringeth great light to this doctrine. For it is made the easier by the distinction which he vseth, namely, according to the persons of the Trinity, whiles hee attributerh the beginning or foundation of it to the Father, the matter to the Son, and the manifesting of it to the holy Ghost.

*Mat.* You iudge rightly: And so indeede is that doctrine to be considered, to our edification & comfort. For they that looke to it, as it were, lying hid in the counsell of God, reape nothing by it, but trouble of minde, and vexation of conscience, For they doe, as if one, to see the better, should fixe his eyes vpon the globe of the Sunne: by the beholding of which light, it is not to be doubted, but his eyes would waxe dim. Who, if he looked vpon that light in the Sunne beames, might haue vse of it, and see all things offered to his sight, and how, & what way to direct his steps. Likewise also, this doctrine, when it is considered in Christ in whom we are chosen, and wee seeke for in our selues the testimony which the holy Ghost yeeldeth vs by our effectuall calling, doth then afford vs exceeding comfort, and assureth vs of our saluation, otherwise doubtfull and vnknowne vnto vs.

Of the calling  
of the elect.

*Theoph.* What meane you by that effectuall calling, whereby you say, that wee are by the holy Ghost assured of our election?

*Mat.* I called it so, to put a difference betweene the true calling of the faithfull, & the false; which is alwaies weake and vnprofitable. For they which are called by the latter, will not heare the voice of God, or, if they heare it, yet are vnwilling to draw neere vnto him; or, if they draw neere, it is with a double and hypocriticall heart; and not long after, they fall from him. But they that be called with the other, are enlightened by the holy Ghost, so as the word of God entureth into their hearts, they draw neere to God,  
and



and follow him with obedience of faith. And such kind<sup>e</sup> of calling as this, is alwaies ioyned with election: for it is the iudge and declarer of it.

*Theoph.* But that effectuall calling seemeth to be nothing else: but the regeneration, which the holy Ghost worketh in vs, whereof we haue spoken before. Of regeneration.

*Mat.* Thou saiest true. For by it he openeth our eares, to heare the voyce of God, that calleth vs: He lighteneth the eyes of our minde, to know him in Christ Iesus: He disposeth our hearts to beleue his doctrine, to embrace it in true faith, confesse it, and follow it: Hee confirmeth our will to loue and feare him: and so to keepe our selues in the reuerence and worship of his Maiesty.

*Theoph.* Therefore whosoever is assured of his effectuall calling, by the fruite of regeneration, hee ought not to doubt of his election and saluation.

*Mat.* He ought not? Nay contrariwise, he ought to be sure of it: which also wee profess in the last article of the Creed, when we say, I beleue the life euerlasting. For by it we not onely vnderstand, that we beleue there is an euerlasting life; but that we are assured, that we our selues shall one day be partakers of it. And that article is set at the end of the Creed, as a necessary consequence vpon the things going before; but especially of the article concerning the holy Ghost, from whom we haue that assurance. That also doth the Lord confirme vnto vs, both by the ministry of the word, whereby he assureth the penitent of the forgiveness of their sinnes; and also by the Sacraments, which be as scales and pledges of that loue wherewith the Father loueth vs in Christ. Of the assurance of saluation.

*Theoph.* Doth not that assurance of our election and saluation, which thou art about to perswade the faithfull of, make them slothfull to good workes?

*Mat.* How can that be? seeing it is certaine, that our election and saluation are confirmed by good workes: without which, as hath beene said, it can no way stand. For which cause PETER thus warneth vs; Wherefore, brethren, giue diligence to make your calling and election sure. For if you doe these things, you shall neuer fall. Moreover, the holy Ghost, which sealeth that assurance in our hearts, can- The assurance of saluation is confirmed by sanctification begun. 1. Pet. 1. 10

not

250 *The summe of Christian Religion.*

§. John, 3.9

not dwell in vs, but that also it will doe good works in vs. For this cause *John* saith, Whosoever is borne of God sinneth not; because his seed remaineth in him: neither can he sinne, because he is borne of God; that is, hee cannot so giue himselfe ouer to sinne, as to continue in it: seeing the holy Ghost hath raised him by true repentance.

*Theoph.* The second Epitome bringeth no lesse comfort to the minds of the godly, than the first did instruction. For by it, both the conscience is appeased, and the minde comforted in a more certaine hope and assurance of eternall saluation. Now the third is behind: which thou saidst consisted of both.

The third Epitome,

*Mat.* It containeth an Antithesis, or contrarietie, of Christian Religion with all other. For, in the difference betweene them, a faithfull man shall see, as it were, a new Breuiarie of the Christian doctrine: which indeed shall be both to his comfort and instruction.

*Theoph.* Let vs therefore consider that difference.

*Mat.* It standeth chiefly in five heads, or principall points.

1. First, that Christian Religion maketh all the chiefe points of the doctrine of it, to agree with the nature of the true God, in the knowledge of whom it strengtheneth and keepeth the godly.

2. The other is, that it setleth and establisheth the glory of God, in the saluation of men: and so the godly are more and more confirmed in the certainty of their saluation.

3. The third, that it ioyneth good workes with our saluation, by a most nere bond (although it be no way grounded vpon them) but yet so, that the faithfull take no matter of boasting out of them.

4. The fourth, that it openeth an entrance for vs vnto God, to craue of him all things necessary.

5. The fifth, that it yeeldeth to the Godly, matter of patience in aduersity, and assurance in dangers. These be the true notes of Christian Religion, which indeede all other religions doe vtterly overthrow; because they admit not Christ, or else do onely receiue him in part.

*Theoph.* We are therefore to weigh these notes; that we may

may shew them to be established of true Religion, and overthrowed of the rest. Let vs therefore begin at the first: I would haue you declare vnto me, how it keepeth the faithfull in the knowledge of the true God.

Christian Religion keepeth the faithfull in the knowledge of the true God.

*Mat.* It doth specially appeare by this, that it maketh his perfect iustice to agree with his perfect mercy. I say, his perfect iustice, inasmuch as it setteth before our eyes, no other way to satisfie it, but the infinite merite of Christ, his Sonne; wherein also his perfect mercy is manifested vnto vs, in that (of his mere grace and fauour) he gaue him to the most shamefull death of the Crosse, to be our redemption: as also, that, for his sake, he giueth vs freely euermore lasting life; hauing no respect to our works. For this cause *Paul* calleth Christ the Image of the inuisible God. In which words he sheweth, that God cannot be knowne, so as his perfect righteousness should agree with his most perfect mercy; but in Iesus Christ alone. Wherunto also ought to be applied the words of Christ vnto *Philip*, *Philip*, he that seeth me, seeth the Father.

Col. 1. 15.

Iohn 1. 49.

*Theoph.* It remaineth that ye prooue all other Religions to overthrow this foundation.

*Mat.* I will doe that with a very little labour. For this is common to them all, to say, that men, by humane works and inuentions, may satisfie the iudgement of God: and so they doe overthrow his perfect righteousness, which they thinke they can satisfie with vaine desires; by the which he is displeased. Moreouer, that men, by their works be able to deserue eternall life. But, whilest they set vp their owne righteousness, thereby to obtaine saluation, either in whole, or in part, they overthrow the perfect mercy of God: so as they worship an idol in stead of the true God. Whereupon is that saying of *Paul*; The heathen be without God in the world. For, as *Iohn* saith. Whosoever abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. And againe, Christ affirmeth; No man cometh to the Father, but by me.

False Religions overthrow the knowledge of the true God.

Ephes. 2. 13.

1 Iohn 2. 23.

Iohn 14. 6.

*Theoph.* Let vs come to the other difference; and let vs see how true Religion establisheth the glory of God, in the saluation of men; and how it assured them of saluation.

*Mat.* That is done by the same doctrine: namely, be-

R

cause

Christian religion assureth  
men of their  
saluation,

*Ephes. 2.9*

*Eph. 1.5.*

*Iohn 10.27.*

*Iohn 5.24*

*Rom. 8.36*

cause it teacheth, that wee haue eternall life of the meere grace of God, without any respect to our workes. For by this meanes, all occasion of glorying is taken from men, and is giuen vnto God alone: which the Apostle witnesseth. For, after that he hath taught, that wee are saued by grace, through faith, and that not of our selues; it is the gift of God, not of works: he presently addeth; lest any should boast. And in another place he saith; He hath adopted, or taken vs to be his childrē, through Iesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will. But, whatsoever serueth to set forth the glory of God, is a true and sound foundation of our saluation. For, seeing it leaneth vpon the euerlasting and vnchangeable good pleasure of God in Christ, it is so sure to those, that by true faith be made his members, that it can neuer be ouerthrowne; euen as Christ himselfe witnesseth, in these words; My Sheepe heare my voice, and I know them, and they follow mee, and I giue vnto them eternall life; neither shall they perish for euer, neither shall any take them out of my hand. My Father which gaue them to mee, is greater than all: neither can any take them out of my Fathers handes. And for this cause hee saith in another place; He that beleueth in him that sent mee, hath euerlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but hath passed from death to life. Which things beeing so, the faithfull may reioyce with *Paul*, in these words; I am perswaded, that neither life nor death, neither Angels nor Principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature can be able to seperate me from the loue of God, which is in Christ Iesus our Lord.

*Theoph.* It is now thy part to shew, that this fundamentall point is ouerthrowne of other Religions.

False religions  
ouerthrow the  
glory of God,

*Mat.* And this also shall be done most easily. For, they ouerthrow the glory of God, and set vp the glory of man, in that they giue vnto men the glory of their owne saluation. Yea rather, their owne saluation is also by this meanes ouerthrowne: seeing that it leaneth vpon so weake a foundation, as their own good works and merits. Whereof their owne conscience is a witnesse. For, although they deceiue themselves

themselves with counterfeiting, it is continually in doubt, and troubled with distrust; but especially, when they perceive death to draw neare vnto them. For then they are so disquieted, that they cannot tell whither to turne them.

*Theoph.* Yea, but the faithfull themselves bee sometimes appalled and beaten downe with the horror of death, and Gods iudgement, no lesse than are the wicked.

*Mat.* I deny not; but that (in some sort) they be oftentimes beaten downe with it; namely, when they set before their eyes the infinit number of their sins, and the grievousnes of them, together with the depth of Gods most perfect iustice: neuertheles, when they cast their eyes vpon Christ crucified for them; they bee presently deliuered from that feare, in the which the wicked be indeed swallowed vp; so that they are not at all holpen by the merits of Christ. The godly therefore, in that combat may bee compared with a man vpon the top of a tower, whose foundation and wals are most strong. For if hee looke downeward, hee is stricken with some sudden feare: from the which he is presently deliuered, when he perceiueth the strength of the building. But the wicked are like vnto one on the top of a tower; but such a one as threatneth falling, yea, rather, is shaken with the winds, which indeed presently falleth.

*Theoph.* Thou hast also sufficiently satisfied mee concerning this difference. Let vs come to the third.

*Mat.* It standeth heertin; That good workes be ioyned with our saluation by a most neare bond; although it doe no way hang vpon them; as it hath bene declared of vs before in the Chapter of Workes. For, it cannot by any other meanes be, that wee should be partakers of Christ to the obtaining of saluation, but by the power of the holy Ghost dwelling in vs: by the which we are not only made fit to doe well; but also kept in the feare of God, so as we runne not headlong into sins. Notwithstanding although the godly do good workes, yet can they haue no cause from them to boast. For, it is God that worketh in vs both to will and to performe, according to his good pleasure. Wherefore they altogether be referred to the glory of God, as also our saluation it selfe is; whereof they be most certaine markes,

True religion  
containeth  
the doctrine  
and practise  
of good  
workes.

Phil. 1. 11.

254 *The summe of Christian Religion.*

*Theoph.* Now proue that good workes be destroyed by false Religions. For they brag, that these are established by them; and doe say, that we destroy them.

False religions be against those that be indeed good works.

*Mat.* I deny not, but that false Religions doe establish superstitious works; which indeed be reiected of vs; but, good works they destroy. For, they so busie their followers and schollers in the obseruation of mens precepts, that they set light by, and despise Gods commandements: as experience doth abundantly witness. Whereof this seemeth to be the cause chiefly; namely, that the wicked, to performe their works, doe trust to their owne free will, that is, to their naturall strength (which, in very deede, is none at all); and so they goe away from Christ: who neuertheless saith; As the branch cannot beare fruite of it selfe, that is, except it abide in the Vine: so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. For, without me ye can do nothing.

*Theoph.* Declare the fourth difference.

True religion doth purely call vpon the true God, through the onely mediator: but the false do far otherwise.

*Mat.* It may be taken from those things which were said before, of vs in the Chapter of Prayer; namely, that Christ being made ours by faith, doth continually make intercession for vs with his Father: whercupon it is, that he is mercifull vnto vs, and heareth our prayers. The wicked, contrariwise, while they come to God in their owne name, or any other name beside Christs, do effect nothing by their Prayers; both because they bee vnworthy to bee heard, and because their intercessors are not sufficient, or meete for that office: for they haue not wherewith to appease the wrath of God, most iustly kindled against him that prayeth. Therefore the vngodly can neuer obtaine any thing at the hands of God, vnlesse it be in his anger: and that doubtlesse falleth out to their condemnation.

*Theoph.* Declare the last difference: and withall shew, how Christian Religion ministreth to the godly, matter of patience in aduersitie; and, touching things to come, maketh them securely assured, and without feare.

*Mat.* That is done by the doctrine of Gods providence: wherewith, when the godly vnderstand that all things be gouerned, although they seeme to be compassed about on euery side with all aduersities, yet do they from thence



thence take matter of cōfort, because they know they are beloued of God; and consequently that aduersities be not sent but to their saluation: as it was at large declared by vs, in the Chapter of Faith.

For this cause, *Dauid* did beare the railings and euill speeches of *Shemei* most patiently; and commanded the souldiers to forbear to kill him: for saith he; He curseth because God hath commanded him to curse *Dauid*. In another place also, being most grievously oppressed of his enemies, he saith thus; I was dumbe, neither opened I my mouth: for thou, O Lord, didst this. *Iob* also, hauing lost his goods (which were partly destroyed by thunder, and partly taken away by the *Caldeans*) tooke comfort of this, that the Lord had giuen, and the Lord had taken away. By the same reason also, we are securely assured concerning things to come, for the Apostle saith; If God be with vs, who can be against vs? He that spareth not his owne Son, but gaue him for vs all, how shall he not with him also freely giue vs all things? As if he had said; Seeing God is our most mercifull Father, and also omnipotent, we haue good cause to hope he will deliuer vs from all dangers, so farre forth as he knoweth it behouefull to his glory and our saluation, and will also giue helpe in our necessities. This is confirmed by the Prophet in these words; Behold the eyes of the Lord are vpon such as feare him, which trust in his mercy, to deliuer their soules from death, and to quicken them in the time of famine.

The same Prophet also in another place warneth vs saying; Cast thy waies vpon the Lord, and trust in him, and he will bring it to passe. But, other Religions take from men all matter of patience and confidence, whilest they teach, that the wisdome or foolishnesse of men are the causes of all things that befall vs; or doe imagine a certaine bare permission or sufferance of God, separated from his will; or else doe admit fortune.

All which things do overthrow the prouidence of God, being the ground worke of comfort to those that be assured of their saluation. It cannot therefore otherwise be, but that the vnbeleeuers are stricken with impatience, so oft as troubles assaile them. For, it falleth out to them as to

2-Sam. 16.10.

Psal. 39. 10.

Iob. 1. 21.

Rom. 8. 30.

Psal. 33. 18.

Psal. 37. 5.

Falſe religi-

ons drives

men to impa-

tience and

deſperation.

dogs which bite the stone, letting goe him that threw it: But, concerning things to come, they are alwaies euen sicke with distrust; being therewith, no doubt, continually disquieted, so as they neuer be at rest.

*Theoph.* You haue sufficiently satisfied me with this opposition betweene true Religion, and all other false religions. But before we end this speech, I would haue a comparison made betweene the followers of them both.

*Mat.* It may bee easily gathered of the former: yea rather, in most of the chiefe points, wee should haue ioined them both together. Neuerthelesse, seeing it so seemeth good vnto thee. I will handle it by it selfe, to the end it may appeare, that the godly, that follow the true religion, are in far better estate, then the vngodly, foolishly giuen ouer to most fond superstitions: and that not onely in the life to come, but also in this present life, although you should reckon vp all the troubles, which we are enforced to suffer, for the profession of the Gospell.

What is the  
happinesse of  
the godly e-  
uen in this  
life.

*Theoph.* But how agreeth that with the saying of *Paul*? If in this life only we belecue in Christ, wee are of all men most miserable.

*Mat.* Those words of *Paul* are not contrarie to that which we haue said of the happinesse of the godly, euen in this life. For, I speake not of a happinesse that standeth in pleasure, riches, or in any earthly commodities; (for, in these, for the most part, the wicked goe far beyond them) but rather in spirituall graces, which God giueth vnto vs: namely, when we be assured of his loue and good will; & that more is, of our saluation by Christ. I therefore thinke with *Paul*, That, of all men we are most miserable, if there were not hope of a better life: especially, considering the afflictions which we are constrained to suffer for the profession of the Gospell; from the which, in the meane time, the wicked be free. But, on the other side, we of all men are most happy, when we haue before vs the assurance of the loue and good will of God, and the hope of our saluation. For, what matter is it if the wicked excell vs in riches, honour, and other commodities of this life? seeing they be things vaine and fleeting: which also commonly bring with them more disprofit, then profit. But we, con-  
trariwise,

trariwise, haue spirituall riches, that can neuer bee taken from vs: which also bring with them sound and true ioy, and that euerlasting. Hence it is, that *Paul* affirmeth; Godliness is profitable to all things: as that which hath the promises of this present life, and of that which is to come. By which words he sheweth, that the fatherly loue of God towards his children, is manifested both in this life and in the life to come.

*Theoph.* Shew me therefore, wherein that happinesse of the godly in this life standeth.

*Mat.* I say that it leaneth vpon foure foundations especially.

*Theoph.* Declare the first.

*Mat.* That the faithfull, being iustified by faith, haue peace with God, through Christ Iesus; through whome (saith the Apostle) we haue, by faith, an entrance to that grace wherein we stand, and doe glory in hope of the glory of God. Whereby it commeth to passe, that death it selfe is not fearefull to vs: Whereas contrariwise, it striketh horrors into the wicked, by reason of the torment of conscience, wherewith they be continually vexed.

*Rem. 5. v.*  
Wherein the  
happinesse of  
the godly in  
this life standeth, and the  
vnhappinesse  
of the wicked

*Theoph.* Goe to the second.

*Mat.* That the faithfull, by Christ, being set free from the seruice of sinne, do ouercome their affections & lusts; whercunto the wicked be bondslaues. From hence is it, that whereas the godly leade an vnreprooeable and quicke life; the wicked contrariwise are tossed with sundry perturbations of the minde, because they cannot satisfie their lusts: and often times they are vexed and tormented both in seeking to compasse them, and with pouerty and diseases, afterwards: sometimes also they become infamous, and are punished of the magistrate.

*Theoph.* Declare the two last points.

*Mat.* The third is this, that the godly haue alwaies an entrance to the mercy of God through Christ; and that which more is, doe by prayers obtaine of him whatsoever is necessary: but the wicked are neuer heard. Finally, the godly, being assured of the good will and fauour of God through Christ, doe wholly commit themselves to his providence; and by the power of the holy Ghost dwelling in

them, doe patiently beare; all aduersities; yea rather doe meckely and thankfully receiue them, as at the hand of a most kinde father. The wicked contrariwise remaine ouerwhelmed with the burthen of their afflictions: because they can neuer bee assured of the loue of God (of whose providence they be altogether ignorant); and therefore be destitute of the spirit of comfort, and run on either into blackish sencelesnes, or else euen into desperation. Which things being so, it is not to be doubted, but that the state of the faithfull, euen in this life, is farre more happie then the state of the wicked. For this cause *David* (who had more then once tried all those things which haue beene said of the godly) speaking vnto God, saith after this manner; Behold O God our shield, and looke vpon the face of thine annointed. For one day in thy courts, is better then a thousand else where: I had rather be a doore-keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the Tabernacles of wickednesse.

*Psal. 134.9.*

The reason whereof hee presently rendereth, in these words; *because the Lord God is the Summe and shield: he giueth grace and glory: he keepeth backe no good thing from them that walke vprightly. O Lord God of hosts, blessed is the man, that trusteth in thee.*

*Theoph.* Now it remaineth, that we consider of the difference that shall bee betweene the faithfull and vnfaithfull, after this life.

The difference betweene the beleeuers & vnbeleuers. after this life.

*Mat.* It shall be very great, insomuch that it shall farre passe that which wee spake of euen now, concerning this life. For, so long as we liue vpon this earth, our happinesse lieth hidden vnder the shame of the Crosse; and the wicked on the other side, in this life, haue for the most part, all things according to their desire: for they are rich, and be in honour and fauour. But their case shall be farre otherwise, when they come to the iudgement seat of the highest Iudge. For then, all the reproach of the godly shall be turned into euermlasting glorie: and, on the other side, the glorie of the wicked shall be turned into euermlasting shame.

*Theoph.* Shew the cause of this.

*Mat.* You might haue gathered it from our former discourse:

course: notwithstanding for memories sake, I will in few words repeate it, in this place; which is. That, being clothed by faith with the most perfect righteousness of Christ, we shall find the tribunall seate of God full of mercie and grace; so as we shall bee receiued into eternall glorie, together with Christ our head, the Angels, and all Saints, that so as well of vs, as of them, God may be praised, and we liue most happily for cuer.

On the other side, the wicked being voide of righteousness, yea rather stained with innumerable sinnes, shall finde the iudgement seat of God, seuer: insomuch, as they shall bee overwhelmed with the horrible wrath of his iust iudgement, and shall at length be cast into the lake of eternall fire: where shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth. Out of these things therefore you may gather, that there is no Religion worthy of this honorable name, besides that which is grounded vpon Christ: for as much as all superstitions which teach men not to come to God, but to goe away from him, do not reconcile them to him, but more and more prouoke him to wrath; and not onely do not bring them to saluation, but doe mislead them into euerlasting destruction.

The conclusion of the former discourse

*Theoph.* Hitherto enough hath beene said of the *Antithesis*, or contrariety, betweene religion and superstitions, and the followers of both. I doe now see plainly, that the Christian Religion is the onely true Religion, and that the followers of it are onely happie and blessed, whether wee looke to this life, or that which is to come. For all other men are on euery side most miserable; yea they are more vnhappie then the brute beasts, which, while they liue, be free from all cares, and after death bee deliuered from all labour and paine.

Psal. 91. 6.

*Mat.* That is most true. But as the Prophet saith; A foolish man knoweth not this: and an vnwise man understandeth not this.

*Theoph.* I am now fully satisfied, with this your holy instruction; wherein you haue run through all the chiefe points of Christian Religion. And when I haue leasure, I will commit them to writing in order, as they were deliuered by you: that so both my selfe may bee edified, and comforted.

comforted with the reading of them, and that also I may communicate them with my brethren. In the meane time I yeeld you most hearty thanks, for the paines which for my sake you haue taken in this behalfe.

The summe  
of the duty of  
Christians.

*Mat.* Nay rather let vs giue thanks to God our heavenly Father, who (of his bounty) hath bestowed on vs this knowledge of his truth, and hath giuen vs also abilitie to declare it. Let vs now intreat him, that as this truth is grounded onely in Iesus Christ his Sonne: so by the power of the holy Ghost it may bee grafted in our mindes, that we may sincerely beleue it with the heart, constantly confesse it with the mouth, and shew forth the effects of it, in outward workes, euen to our last breath. Which that it may be, I beseech God to grant vs also, that we may ioyn our selues to the militant Church, and by the ministerie thereof, bee confirmed in the loue and feare of God: that so we may be at length receiued into the triumphat Church together with our head and Lord Iesus Christ.

*Theoph.* I doe therefore intreat thee (most mightie God, and heavenly Father) to vouchsafe vs these graces, and to cause that the knowledge of thy truth may bee spread abroad thorowout all the world; that all may acknowledge thee the onely true God, and Iesus Christ thy Sonne the onely Saviour & mediator of mankind. And to thee alone be praise and glory, both now and for euer.

*Mat.* Amen,

**FINIS.**



# A SHORT TABLE, CONTAINING THE PRINCIPALL points of this Booke.

<b>A</b>	<b>ministration thereof.</b>	230
<b>A</b> Doration of Creatures.	The agreement betweene Circumcision and Baptisme,	85
In Adversitie: sixe speciall points of consolation.	ibid.	37
Afflictions for righteousness.	what profits commeth by Baptizing of children.	38
Impossible for the godly to bee without them.	How, in Baptisme, the children of beleeuers lacking faith, be partakers of Christ.	35
Sixe fruits thereof, viz. Humility, Repentance, Pitying of others, Prayer, Triall of our faith, Renouncing of the world.	idem.	32-33-34
Articles, why there bee more then three concerning Christ in the Creed.	Battell of the flesh and spirit.	40
Use of the Articles of the Creed against three severall temptations.	To Beleue, what it is.	32-33-34
<b>B</b>	Difference betweene the Beleeuers, and vnbeleeuers, after this life.	158
<b>B</b> Ackbiting.	To Binde and Loose, what it is.	26
Baptisme, and the institution thereof.	Bishop, why so called.	258
The signe and Sacramental rite thereof.	<b>C</b>	286
The commandement and promise.	<b>T</b> He name of Christ.	ibid.
The word in Baptisme expounded.	His person.	207
What sinnes are put away in Baptisme.	His office of King, Prophet, and Priest.	143
Our vnion with Christ thereby.	The summe and duty of a Christian,	227
Why Christ would haue the word preached before the ad-	Church, what it is. 55. Visible.	206
	56. Inuisible. 55. Why it is called Holy, Catholike.	58-59
	Of the Church before Christ.	idem.
	Christ the foundation of the Church.	57
	The keyes of the Church.	219
	The exposition of the Commandements	

# THE TABLE.

mandements. 76.77.78	H
How the Commandements of the first Table agree together. 76	<b>W</b> hy the Holy Ghost is called holy. 128
Communion of Saints. 65	What the word Honour signifieth. 124
Creation, why ascribed to the Father. 28	What is the Happinesse of the godly in this life. 256
The exposition of the Creed. 24	Wherin it consisteth. 257
25. and 63. the parts there- of. 26	I
D	<b>T</b> he excuses of new Idola- ters. 88
<b>W</b> hy Christs death is oft- ner mentioned in the Scripture, then the other things be did for vs. 46	The answer vnto them. 89
Ecclesiasticall Discipline. 243	A comparing of the new and old Idolaters. 90
Against drunkennesse. 147	Obiections of Idolaters for the adoration of Images. 93
E	The answer vnto them. <i>ibid.</i>
<b>E</b> lders, why so called. 208	Why God is called Iealous. 101
Of Enuie. 148	What the name Iesus signifieth 17
F	Of the Image of God. 10
<b>F</b> aith, what it is. 23. 24	Imputation of Christs righte- ousnesse vnto vs. 155
How Faith iustifieth. <i>ibid.</i>	Who be Infidels. 26
Faith cannot bee without good workes. 165. it is the ma- ster of them, of which it is af- terward preferred. <i>ibid.</i>	Of good intents. 225
Why our Faith is referred to each person of the Trinity, by it selfe. 26	Of Gods Iustice. 8
Whether the Father only crea- ted vs. 27	Of Iustification. 21
Of Flattery, and what it is. 44	The faithfull cannot be Iustifi- ed by workes. 154
Of mans free-will. 8. and 52	Why we bee Iustified no other- wise then by Faith. 160
G	K
<b>W</b> hy God is called Father 29. Omnipotent. <i>ibid.</i>	<b>T</b> he Kingdome of God, what it is. 180
Maker of heauen and earth. <i>ibid.</i>	How it commeth. 182
The Gospell what it is. 212	The Kingdome of Satan. 181
	L
	<b>T</b> he Law Morall what it is, 71. distinguished from the Ceremoniall & Indicial. <i>ib.</i>

## THE TABLE.

engraven in the mindes of men, renewed by Moses, expounded & dilated in many places of the Scriptures. 72	How many waies it is taken in vaine. <i>ibid.</i>
comprised in few words: and divided into two Tables. <i>ibi.</i>	Who is our neighbour. 154
the summe thereof. <i>ibid.</i> the use thereof. 162	Against the Nicodemites. 108
The agreement and disagreement betwene the Law and the Gospell 113	O
It is neuer separated from the Gospell. 214	A N Oath, what it is. 112
Why God gaue a Law that we cannot keepe. 162	A vaine Oath. <i>ibid.</i>
Of Christian liberty. 97	Against Anabaptistes, that condemne all Oaths. 114
How Lord signifieth Redeemer. 28	Of offences. 39
Lying, and the three kinds thereof. 145	P
M	Popish Pardons. 211
The use of Meates and other things 98	Who be comprehended vnder the name of Parents. 123
Christ, why a sufficient & only Mediator. 175	Of Christian Patience. 185
Merit of works, the examination and confutation thereof. 167	A briefe rehearsall of Popish impieties. 210
Objection of the defenders of Merit. 168	Prayer, & the excellency thereof. 171. the chiefe worke of a Christian. <i>ibid.</i>
The answer thereto. <i>ibid.</i>	A short description of true Prayer. <i>ibid.</i>
Ordinary calling of the Ministers. 206	The summe and parts of the Lords Prayer. 176
Three things required in the lawfull calling of them. 207	The exposition thereof. 179
Why they are called Ministers. <i>ibid.</i>	180. &c.
Their authoritie. 216	What corruption Iathan hath brought into Prayer. 197
N	Confutation of errors and objections about Prayer to Saints. 172. 173
Taking of Gods Name in vaine, what it is. 107	Whether the providence of God should keep vs from Prayer. 195
	It is necessary to Pray vnto God, though he know better than our selues what is expedient for vs. 106
	Preaching

# THE TABLE.

Preaching, the right manner thereof.	314	The number of them. <i>ibidem</i>	
Prophaning of Gods word.	108	Whether they be necessary to Saluation.	126
Hurts growing of prosperity.	36	Saluation wrought by Christ.	15
Of Gods providence in generall.	7	The assurance thereof.	249
In special towards the faithfull.	29	Confirmed by sanctification. <i>ib.</i>	
		Sanctification, what it is.	48
		Why ascribed to the holy Ghost.	28
		Ministers, why called shepherds.	208
<b>R</b>		Sinne against the Holy Ghost.	218
The foundation of our Redemption.	39	Originall Sinne.	12
Why it is ascribed to the Son.	28	How the children of the godly are borne in originall Sinne.	232
Regeneration, what it is.	48	Personall Succession.	209
The Antithesis betweene Christian Religion and false Religion.	150. 151	Of the word Supper, and the institution thereof.	232
Abridgement of the points of Christian Religion threefold.	244. 245. 246	The signe thereof.	<i>ibid.</i>
God remitteth the punishment and paine.	219	Why there is a double signe therein.	233
An objection against this doctrine, and the answer thereunto.	220	The Sacramentall rise of the Supper.	<i>ibid.</i>
Of repentance.	50	What the Minister must doe in ministering the same.	<i>ibid.</i>
Al finnes forgiven to them that Repent.	118	What they must doe that come vnto it.	<i>ibid.</i>
<b>S</b>		Our spirituall food in the Lords Supper.	234
Sabbath, why it was commanded vnder the Law.	118	Confutation of absurdities following vpon popish Transubstantiation of the Lords Supper.	237
Sacraments, what they be.	222	Two things required in the Supper.	237
Of whom they ought to be administered.	223	Eating of Christs body, & drinking his blood, in the Supper.	<i>ibid.</i>
What be the conditions in them.	224		
Vpon whom their efficacy dependeth.	225		

# THE TABLE.

How taken. 244  
 How we on earth are partakers  
 of his body in heauen. *ibid.*  
 Swearing see Oath.  
 This word Symbole, what it sig-  
 nifieth. 25

## T

**T**ables of the Law, see Com-  
 mandements, and Law.

## V

**W**Hy God claymeth Ven-  
 geance to himfelfe. 130  
 Our Vnion with Christ. 19  
 How the holy Ghost is faid to  
 be author thereof. 55

## VV

**O**f false witnesse bearing,  
 out of iudgement 143  
 Of the Word preached and re-  
 ceined by faith. 202  
 The efficacy thereof. 217  
 Admonition to fuch as heare  
 the preaching of the Word. 203  
 What difference betwene the  
 good workes of the faithfull  
 and vnfaithfull. 158  
 Threefold vse of good Workes.  
 164  
 The vse of the doctrine of good  
 workes. 170  
 Of the imperfection of our  
 workes. 168  
 Of spirituall worship. 96  
 Against worshipping of Idols.  
 87  
 Worshipping of Creatures. 85

FINIS.